

# Rosicrucian Heritage



March 2019, Vol 22 No 1



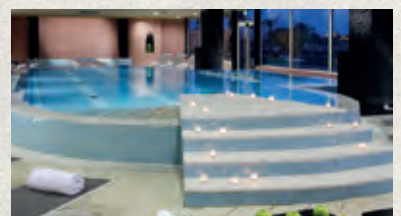
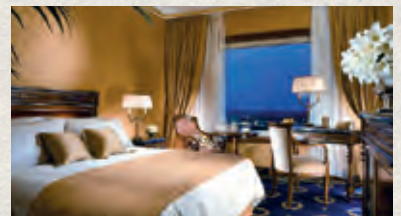
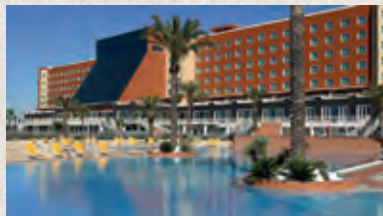
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whether in Brazil, California, Sweden or Spain — attract several thousand members every four years to celebrate and re-dedicate themselves to the higher human ideals that all people of good will and spiritual aspiration strive to live by. Bookings are proceeding rapidly

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# Rosicrucian Heritage

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## Cover spread

The Rose  
Symbol of the evolving Soul





# Moving On

*by Christian Bernard  
Imperator of AMORC*

**O**NE OF the basic principles of psychology of the past few decades states that a problem cannot be solved if its origin is not known. This has led to methodologies involving lengthy therapies, regression to early childhood and even regression to past lives.

Of course, we have a better overview of our problems and reactions to them when we are aware of their origin; but is that really enough? Should we be satisfied only with knowledge of a principle that in some cases excuses many

of our attitudes and takes our responsibility away from us? Is it enough merely to know the *cause* of our bad actions, false words and negative thoughts?

An explanation can help us to understand what we are doing and why, but it serves no purpose if we lack the will to correct things. And what if the most important is not to know the origin of our problems but simply to accept them (as with Zen philosophy) or to fight them (but in a chivalric manner)?

Our life is governed by rhythms and habits. Our



anxieties, fears and phobias may be exaggerated, but sometimes we need to know for instance why we are scared in certain situations or have an irrational fear when confronted with certain objects or animals, certain circumstances or people.

Knowing the reasons may be interesting on the intellectual plane, but does it really solve anything? Our reactions and non-reactions are most of all habits, so let us take a journey as an example. If we are afraid of the unknown, moving from one place to another may seem arduous. The first time we may hesitate and perhaps have an unpleasant experience. The road seems long but then little by little as we get used to things, what used to seem difficult and disagreeable looks very simple. The way feels shorter, we react better and become used to it.

We cannot advance whilst walking backwards. Nor can we climb the stairs of life by descending them. If we want to know what lies behind the door before us, we must have the courage to open it. If the past is going to help us to live in the present and to prepare for the future, it should not hinder our evolution. The power to accomplish is earned by a strong will. One does not win at every turn in life, but even after falling down one can stand up and begin again in another way, a better way.

It has often been said that destiny smiles at the courageous. I am not sure this is always the case, but many times we become aware of the fact that pessimists are not smiled upon much by joy and happiness. An important feature of being human is having difficulties, torments and sufferings. Nobody can escape them but the whole difference lies in how we are able to overcome them and in how we react in the face of adversity. This is what we call the *Mastery of Life*.

**We cannot advance whilst walking backwards. Nor can we climb the stairs of life by descending them. If we want to know what lies behind the door before us, we must have the courage to open it.**

We are masters of our own destiny; we have our own free choice at least of the way in which we are going to stand up against the trials of life. First of all, we should try to overcome our fears and apprehensions or change our way of thinking, by talking and reacting with thoughtfulness and certainly with prudence. At times we were, perhaps, able to overcome our anxieties because we were forced to do it and we had no other choice. This experience can be applied in many situations. We start

by making a small effort at the beginning and slowly it becomes less and less difficult. To be aware of this does not shield us from the trials and tribulations of life, and on top of that, we are more often at the mercy of circumstances than acting as their cause.

Returning to my former train of thought, I believe we should always try to improve ourselves and allow our life to evolve in a positive way without always looking

**We are masters of our own destiny; we have our own free choice at least of the way in which we are going to stand up against the trials of life.**

for guilt; and we must do so with no excuses or pretexts. Nothing should prevent us from moving on. Whatever choices we make, we must take responsibility for them. And if they do not turn out well, we should not blame anyone else. We should also be patient, for what we may believe to be a tragedy could turn into a blessing. I am sure you have already had this sort of experience, perhaps many times, in different ways. Perhaps you are familiar with the Chinese proverb: *"Let 7 years go by after disgrace and it will become grace."*

For myself, I am convinced that 7 days, 7 hours and 7 minutes is enough. This is also what the alchemy of life is about. People who habitually react positively when facing problems attract what we call luck; I really believe that. It is said that a Rosicrucian is a walking question mark. Certainly, this is an indispensable quality and contemplation is as important as meditation. Nevertheless, we should not allow all the problems that come to our mind to ruin our life, nor to deprive us of the simple joys or fleeting moments of happiness that we often ignore and do not value enough. We may be conscious of the world around us; of the cruelty that prevails on earth; and of all the injustices we endure both as groups and individually. But let us never forget what the Belgian singer and poet Jacques Brel once said: *"... see in everything every beautiful thing."*

If memories overwhelm you, if sadness oppresses you and you feel broken-hearted, if only the ugliness of the world appears before you..., then hold on to the strength of the spirit within you. Do not give in. Look for the tiny flame that still shines within your soul and then provokingly, even insolently, rise up, and facing the forces that are pulling you downwards, and with pride and conviction say: *"I am moving on!!!"* Conscience, confidence, perseverance and courage..., this is my wish for you.





by *Kenneth U Idiadi*

*Grand Administrator for English speaking West Africa  
of the Rosicrucian Order, and Director of the  
Supreme Grand Lodge of AMORC*



# Sanctum Musings

## SYNCHRONICITY

**T**HROUGHOUT the period of life, from birth to transition, we are constantly acquiring knowledge through conscious and unconscious learning. Today, we have built up a formidable wealth of knowledge that has placed us in many ways far above other animals on the planet. This knowledge has continued to grow but some still argue that what is unknown to us is much more than what we know. And there are certain experiences we have that clearly reveal to us that there is more to life than what is commonly known. The following accounts are examples of such experiences. Though fictional, the elements of the following strange stories are taken from true life incidents which have been simplified for ease of understanding and demonstration of the basic principles involved; truth as is often said is even stranger than fiction.

### A Recurrent Number

Theresa, a mother of three kids had just finished preparing her shopping list and was on her way out of her house when she received a call on her mobile phone from a number that ended with the figures 500001. Wondering who this could be she stopped to answer the call only to find out that it was an unknown person who had mistakenly called her number. The caller apologised and ended the call. When she reached the door, the number called again. Once again, she stopped to receive the call

and it was the same person who again quickly apologised for repeating the mistake. A little bit irritated from the distraction the calls had caused her, she quickly entered her car. As she was about to start the car, the number rang again. Now she felt anger rising up in her and she quickly took in a deep breath and calmed herself down before she answered the call. This time the caller quickly hung up without even saying a word. As she drove to the shopping mall, thoughts of the number 500001, the last digits of the phone number of the unknown caller, continued to occupy her mind. Having parked her car in the car park, she walked briskly into the shopping mall.

To her greatest surprise, immediately she passed through the entrance of the mall, she was greeted with great fanfare by the staff who excitedly told her she was the five hundred thousand and first person to enter into the mall. They had crossed the five hundred thousand mark and Management had decided to celebrate this with a gift to her of free shopping coupons worth a lot of money. As the enormity of the incident sunk in, she suddenly became struck by the coincidence of the numbers. And a strange sense of a deeper meaning to life came over her.

### Symbolical Connection

In another example of a strange experience, a young man named George was taking his usual Sunday afternoon walk down the street to his grandmother's house. He





always looked forward to these visits as his granny, though almost 100 years in age was always full of life and fun to be with. While on the way his attention was suddenly drawn to a bird on the branch of a tree that seemed to be looking down at him intently. The plumage of the bird was an unusual and striking combination of blue, orange and white.

He virtually stopped in his tracks as he looked up towards the bird. Then in what appeared to be like a slow-motion movie the bird spread its wings and took to flight climbing upwards towards the sun. George continued to watch the bird until it seemed to disappear into the sun. He then continued on his brisk walk. When he got to his grandmother's house, he was surprised to find her in bed. He learned that she had taken ill in the morning of that very day. When she saw him, she smiled. He sat by her bedside and held her hand. Then quite unexpectedly she calmly turned her face towards him and looked straight into his eyes intently for a sustained period of time. Strangely, the image of the bird he had seen on the branch came to his mind. She then turned her head away and gave up her last breath. Her transition was peaceful and graceful. As he witnessed the transition, George spontaneously recalled the image of the bird flying into the sun. And a strange sense of some deeper meaning to life came over him.

These two examples give us an insight into the phenomenon of synchronicity in which two or more incidents that would have been otherwise unconnected become connected by meaning. In the first example the last digits of a phone number which became impressed in the

consciousness of a lady turned out to be the exact figure that opened an opportunity for her under completely different circumstances. In the second example, the event of a bird in flight became a potent symbol applied to another materially unrelated event. Synchronicity could be defined as the spontaneous awareness of an underlying connection between two or more outwardly independent events.

### Carl Jung's Definitions

Synchronicity is a term that was coined by analytical psychologist Carl Jung. He used this term to classify what could be called extraordinary coincidences or to use one of his terms: "*meaningful coincidences.*" These are events that are connected only by meaning and apart from which no other connection is materially observed. During his career, Jung used a variety of terms to define synchronicity.

Each term gave a particular insight into the principle. One of the other ways he defined synchronicity was as "*a causal connecting (togetherness) principle.*" This simply means a principle that connects two events without one event being the cause of the other. Another term that he used was "*a causal parallelism.*" This refers to two or more separate incidents having the same inclination in the sense of one being a parallel or reflection of the other without there being any material cause or connection between them.

Jung insisted that if two or more incidents are connected simply by what they mean subjectively to an observer, such a connection could be just as valid



*Analytical psychologist Carl Jung.*



as one based on the law of cause and effect on the material plane.

## Synchronicity and Superstition

Many would argue that since the meaning or interpretation of an incident is wholly a subjective matter, it is unscientific to use it as the basis of defining an actual relationship between two separate incidents. There is some validity in this point of view because superstition arises when we arbitrarily come up with reasons to connect two or more independent and separate incidents. How then may we differentiate between superstition and synchronicity? Examining a typical superstitious belief will help to demonstrate the difference between superstition and synchronicity.

There is a superstition, held in some parts of the world, which claims that to hit your left leg on a stone while walking portends bad luck ahead. And this could be avoided if one turns back or changes the predominant intention in mind at the time the stone was kicked.

Let us imagine a situation in which a man who holds this superstitious belief is occasioned to hit his left leg on a stone and for some reason chooses to ignore what it portends and goes ahead as if nothing happened. If soon after, he is accosted by hoodlums as he walks round the next street corner, he would naturally associate the ill-fated meeting with the kicking of the stone. Would this be a case of superstition or a case of synchronicity?

In the two examples of synchronicity earlier given, the persons involved had no expectations or anticipation of a subsequent event that would synchronize with the earlier one. The synchronicity only came to their attention after both events had occurred. And this fact was released from the deep recesses of the subconscious mind into the awareness of the conscious mind in an involuntary manner. When we consciously look for correspondences between events based on unsubstantiated beliefs, we enter

into the realms of superstition. We are superstitious by choice and can choose to drop superstitious beliefs by an act of will. On the other hand, synchronicity is beyond our volition, it just happens.

## Higher Dimensions

When synchronicity is experienced, we become aware of the activities of the subconscious intelligence. And it makes us realise that certain aspects of our lives are being intelligently directed towards particular outcomes without our being aware of it. This means that there are some dimensions of our existence that we are unconscious of. The three dimensions of space (length, width, and height/depth) along with the dimension of time are the basis of our perception of all that exists in the world around us. The three dimensions enable us to perceive the Universe as solid while the dimension of time is necessary for the perception of movement. However, string theory in modern physics asserts that there are up to six other dimensions of existence making up a total of ten in number. And the reality of these ten dimensions is backed by the laws of mathematics.

Events that are based on any of the six dimensions that are beyond our awareness would have characteristics impossible to explain within the parameters of our daily existence. To explain them, one must have at least some understanding of the existence of the other unseen dimensions involved. To help us better appreciate the effect of being unconscious of other dimensions, let us imagine that we were only able to experience life in two dimensions: length and width. If as a two-dimensional being, we were to come across a three-dimensional object, we would only be conscious of two of its dimensions at a time. A three-dimensional object like a pyramid with a square base would appear to be just a triangle from the side and from below it would just be a square.

To the two-dimensional being these would be two completely different objects; a triangle and a square. If a unique identity number was to be inscribed on all sides of the pyramid including on its square base, the two-dimensional being would notice that the identity number on the square was the same as that on the triangle. This would be perplexing. And within the context of two dimensions only, no explanation could be given to justify why two completely different objects should be identified as being the same. It would take knowledge of the third dimension (height/depth) to be able to understand that the triangle and the square were indeed the same object; a pyramid with a square base.

Similarly, an experience of synchronicity where two unconnected events strangely share the same







characteristics could actually be a case of seeing different aspects of one event where the event in question involves more dimensions than one is capable of perceiving. So instead of seeing the event as one, you only see limited dimensions of it with each view appearing to portray a different event. However, from a higher dimensional level the various views would be seen to be of one and the same incident. And this higher dimension view could filter down to our consciousness as a meaningful idea.

## Cosmic Attunement

In synchronicity, the meaningful connection between incidents is intuitively perceived. Our intuition is a function of the subconscious mind which unlike our conscious mind acts spontaneously without going through the processes of reasoning and logic. Our conscious mind is limited to an awareness of four dimensions; length, width, height, and time. On the other hand, subconscious mind is aware of all dimensions of existence which is why Rosicrucian philosophy refers to it as the mind of God in humanity.

There is of course a channel of communication between the conscious mind and the subconscious mind. Unfortunately, many human beings, due to a misapplication of the willpower, unwittingly interfere with the free flow of communication between both minds. This puts us out of attunement with the Cosmic which results in all types of inharmonious experiences. The range of problems people encounter such as diseases, poverty, insecurity, misfortune, and other forms of distress are the effects of being out of attunement with the Cosmic.

We must therefore aspire to be in cosmic attunement at all times in order to enjoy health, happiness and peace. This is the mastery of life. The teachings of the Rosicrucian Order are aimed at assisting members towards achieving self-mastery which involves maintaining constant attunement with the Cosmic. As a member progresses in physical, mental, and psychic development there is an increase in the occurrence of intuitive impressions. This is an indication of the freeing up or reduction of the interference in the channel of communication between the inner and outer minds. And as progress is made, it is likely that there will be more frequent experiences of synchronicity. In other words, if we notice an increase in synchronistic occurrences we could take this as an indication that we are undergoing some form of psychic or spiritual development.

If we are able to discern an underlying pattern or tendency behind two or more synchronistic events, we may be able to make decisions that would put us in a position of advantage as long as the pattern persists. Perhaps for instance you seem to notice a general receptivity to your suggestions by others as an underlying tendency which has been indicated by two synchronistic events. You may then wish to use the period to resolve, for example, any lingering contentions with family members, friends, or acquaintances since your chances of success would be higher with their enhanced receptivity to you. If on the other hand, a pattern of rejection is indicated you may wish to postpone making any sort of propositions to others for the time being until a change is sensed.

The patterns of life which we can sometimes discern have at their foundation the oneness of all being. The unity which underlies all existence causes everything to be connected to every other thing at some level. When we think in terms of the unity of being the idea of synchronicity becomes self-evident because synchronicity is simply the realisation of inner unity between two or more outwardly isolated events.

The unity of all nature is realised as one of the features of Cosmic Consciousness or psychic illumination. When this happens, the interconnectedness between all things is experienced. And this could in a sense be said to be the ultimate synchronicity.

We should not go around seeking to find hidden connections between things in life because we would unconsciously thereby create artificial connections where none actually exist. This would more or less be a form of superstition. If, however the experience of synchronicity spontaneously occurs in the course of our daily lives we should consider it a special gift to remind us of the wonderful unity of life and the fact that there is always more to life than meets the eye.



# ZOROASTER

Ancient discoverer of light and dark

by *Nahid Aryanpour*

*Oh Bounteous Lord when I  
approach You with good thoughts,  
silent meditation teaches me  
the best things to say.  
-- Yazna 43 of the Gathas --*



*Depiction of Zoroaster in Clavis Artis, an alchemy manuscript published in Germany in the late 17th or early 18th century.*

**Z**OROASTER, also known as Zarathustra, was one of the great avatars of the pre-Christian era. He is referred to as a *Saoshyant*, the one who brings about the final renovation of the world. In the Avestan language: *Saoshyant* means ‘the one who brings benefit’, but also ‘the bringer [revealer] of light’.

Zoroaster’s birthplace is uncertain though it is widely believed that he was born in the eastern part of the Iranian Plateau, perhaps in Bactria in modern-day Afghanistan, but also perhaps in the Zagros mountains of modern-day Iran. Some sources claim he lived during the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE, roughly contemporaneous with the second intermediate period of Egypt or a few centuries



before it. Others believe he lived during the 7<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> Century BCE<sup>1</sup>, at roughly the time Solon, the great Athenian statesman and poet. And yet others believe that if he lived at all, it would have been far back in pre-history, possibly as far as 8,000 years ago<sup>2</sup>.

There is no agreement as to when Zoroaster lived, nor even where he lived, but it is likely that what he taught was not so much an entirely new religion, but more a reformation of an existing belief system with a few radically new concepts added to it. Just as Jesus is portrayed in the New Testament as a reformer of an old religion, Judaism, Zoroaster may have been a reformer of a much older, possibly Vedic religion with roots stretching far back into pre-history.

There has been speculation that he lived and wrote around the same time as Akhenaton or Moses, but this is almost certainly incorrect, for it is based only on the single thread of commonality between the three religions emanating from them, namely monotheism. But if Zoroaster lived centuries before Akhenaton, it is not inconceivable that his teachings eventually found their way into the Egyptian court of Akhenaton's father Amenhotep III or centuries earlier, just as the highest expression of the Supreme Deity of the early Vedic tradition, spoken of as "Om", found its way into the



*Behistun: 'Darius triumphing over his enemies beneath the Zoroastrian symbol.'*

**Zoroaster may have been a reformer of a much older, possibly Vedic religion with roots stretching far back into pre-history.**

Egyptian pantheon as "Am", with Amn ("the [masculine] Am" or Amun) being the specific two or three foot high graven expression of that supreme deity located in Thebes. Cross-fertilisation of religious beliefs over thousands of miles no doubt happened to an extent then, just as it does to a much greater extent today.

### Zoroastrianism and the Three Abrahamic Religions

Zoroaster's life may be shrouded in mystery, but there is nothing mysterious about the noble principles he left to us. They show the way to a truthful and constructive life, and are clearly an ancient prototype of Akhenaton's belief system, of Judaism, of Christianity and of Islam. Central to Zoroastrianism are the concepts of *light* and *dark*. It is of course not the only concept of a binary pair of opposites to have emerged in the human mind, but probably the oldest by far.

Day and night must have been deeply ingrained in the daily lives of our early hominid ancestors long before fully formed human beings emerged. It is certainly the most clearly manifested pair of opposites in nature, and most creatures know what a vast difference there is between them. The light of day and the dark of night were transformed into the *light of goodness*, the Ahuru Mazda or Ormazd ('illuminating wisdom'), and the *darkness of evil*, the Angra Mainyu or Ahriman (destructive or dark spirit).

Zoroaster (Zardusht in Middle and Modern Persian) was in every way an ordinary man, upset by the suffering and injustice he saw around him. Much to the alarm of his wife and relatives, he went off into the wilderness one day in search of answers (sounds familiar doesn't it: Moses, Jesus, Mohammed all did the same). One day while sitting before a cave entrance, he pondered over whether his ascetic life was worth the struggle, and maybe he should give it all up and return home. Soon the sun sank behind the distant hills and darkness crept into the valley below. As he watched this happening, he realised for the first time that just as external life was divided into the light of day and the darkness of night, so too the world of thought was divided into the light of good and the darkness of evil. And evil thoughts, the darkness of evil or *Ahriman*, were the cause of all human suffering.

This may seem trivial and obvious to a 21<sup>st</sup> Century mind, but we must remember that many basic principles we take entirely for granted today were once thought of for the first time by a single individual, and prior to which no one had ever thought of it. There has been a first time for everything we can think of, and undoubtedly there



was also a first time for the emergence of the concept of good and evil and its association with light and darkness.

## Good Thoughts, Words and Deeds

Following this revelation, Zoroaster returned to his home to begin teaching all who would listen, about goodness and the need to pursue it at all costs. He was probably the greatest and most radical of religious leaders of his time, and for centuries after his death. And to an extent, his legacy survives in the doctrines of the three Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Zoroaster's teachings form a sacred triangle with the three main points occurring again and again in mantric form as *Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds*, or in Avestan: *Humata, Hukhta, Hvareshta*.

Let's look at the first point: *Good Thoughts*. In the Zoroastrian sacred literature, it is written: "Your character is built by your thoughts. As you think so will you become." Zoroaster stressed that everyone had free



Detail of *The School of Athens* by Raphael, 1509, showing Zoroaster.

not clearly saying so, certainly acknowledges the existence of reincarnation or transmigration as found in the Vedic religious stream.

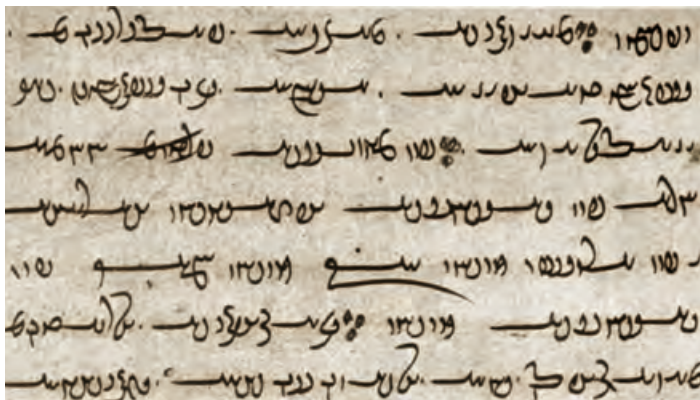
Next, look at the second point: *Good Words*. In this regard the sacred writings counsel us to "...render to each man his due." Speak words from a kind heart, for each day offers endless opportunities for good words, spoken generously and touching another's heart; thereby potentially positively changing his or her life. Words can inspire people to do both good or bad. Good words are the only ones

**Good words are the only ones worth keeping, for only good words lead to growth and upliftment in all areas of life.**

will and could choose between thinking good thoughts or harbouring bad thoughts; the right thinking and wrong thinking of the much later Buddhist philosophy. "If you think nobly, you will be born with a noble character. If you think evil, you will be born with evil traits." Noble ideals as thoughts, are the beginning of all things and hence the first point of the Zoroastrian sacred triangle. And as the quotation implies, Zoroastrianism, though

worth keeping, for only good words lead to growth and upliftment in all areas of life.

And finally the third point of the triangle: *Good Deeds*. Through acts of kindness, a person transforms previously thought about and spoken of ideals into physical action. Only by performing 'deeds' do things finally crystallise into physical reality. Through every good deed, those doing the deed, as well as those benefiting from it, advance a bit on their path to ever greater spiritual realisation. In the Rosicrucian philosophy, the key to true spiritual growth lies in selfless acts of service to others.



Manuscript portion of the *Zend Avesta*, the Zoroastrian scripture. (Bodleian MS J2)

## Only One Lasting Good

Zoroastrianism, also called Mazdayazna or *din-e zardusht* (the religion of Zoroaster) by its followers, claims that for all people there is but one lasting good, "...the health, power and purity of the soul." We have a striking example of this in the clothing of the Parsis (meaning:





*Zoroastrian Parsi Navjote Ceremony.*

Persians) in India, who still adhere to this ancient religion of light.

The Parsis wear whatever dress is best suited to their occupation, but beneath their outer garments, the sudreh and kusti (a white shirt and a belt made from white wool) must always be worn. The sudreh is symbolic of the simplicity and purity of life. The kusti, made of lamb's wool, reminds the wearer of innocence and gentleness. In the act of putting on the kusti, each person makes a commitment to fight evil. This simple act tries to speak to the true inner man or woman as the belt itself is given three winding turns: *good thoughts, good words and good deeds*, always and everywhere!

The followers of Zoroaster did not *worship* fire, as is sometimes thought. To them, fire was a symbol, and a symbol only, of spiritual purity. His philosophy is based on the supreme value of spiritual health and wellbeing, and provides its adherents with a sense of divine order where a pattern of life in the form of regular prayers and rituals to revitalise the world, social periods and acts of philanthropy, and private moments of devotion to the

great God of Light *Ahura Mazda*, gives them a sense of cohesion and continuity.

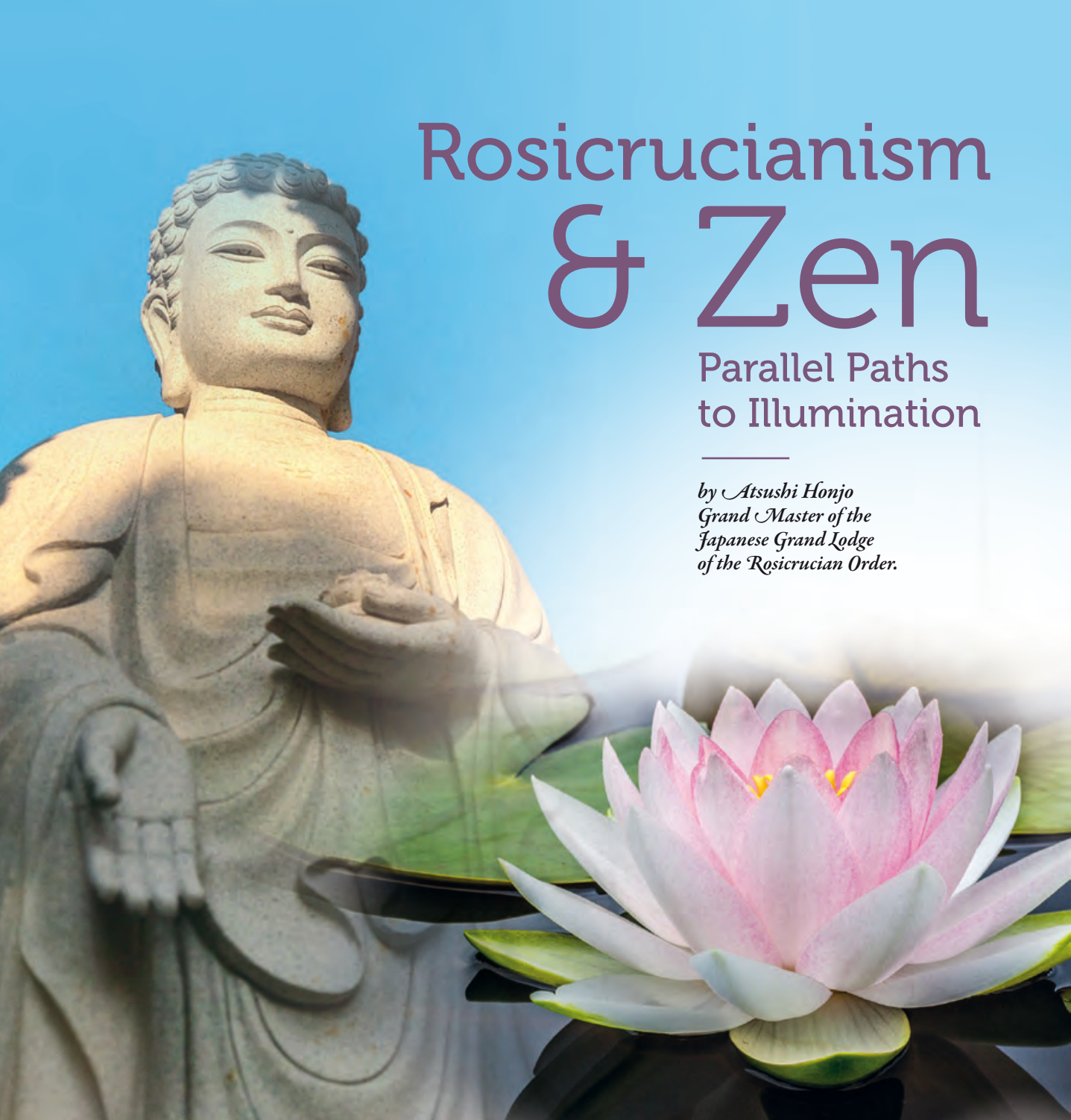
*Hambandagi* is a term with an inner meaning that the pursuit of goodness is not just a means, but is an end in itself; for it, and it alone, leads to social cooperation, harmony and personal spiritual liberation. It is a pattern for living a holy life where the Cosmic provides us with many opportunities for growth, progress and happiness. If we could ask Zoroaster what happiness is, he would probably give a single answer: "*Happiness is manifesting your soul for all to see.*"

1. Zoroaster is the English variant of the Greek form of his name: Zōroastrēs (Ζωροάστρης).
2. The Avestan language was an early form of Persian and an Indo-European language closely related to Sanskrit. It is partly because the oldest parts of the Zoroastrian teachings were written in old Avestan that experts in the field believe the religion's origins lie close in time to the emergence of the Vedic religious stream during the mid to late 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE.
3. The *Gathas* and *Yasna Haptanghaiti*, both works assumed to have been written by Zoroaster, were written in Old Avestan, a language dated to the early part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millenium BCE latest, and more likely several hundred years earlier and contemporaneous with Sanskrit as a living language. All known surviving Zoroastrian literature was however written (or transcribed from earlier documents) no earlier than the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> Centuries CE. Zoroaster's writings were however referred to by the ancient Greeks, and Plutarch and Diogenes for example suggested an era prior to 6,000 BCE.
4. Following the conquest of Babylon and lands to the east and north of it by Alexander the Great, the Seleucid Kings introduced a new calendar based on the year of his death (323 BCE). The Zoroastrian priests countered this by formalising their own calendar based on the birth of their prophet Zoroaster, and the so-called 'traditional date', widely accepted up to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, was placed "258 years before Alexander", or 581 BCE.
5. See *Plato Prehistorian* by Mary Settegast, 1990 Lindisfarne Press



*Zoroastrian Temple of Yazd, Iran. Photo: GFDL.*





# Rosicrucianism & Zen

Parallel Paths  
to Illumination

by *Atsushi Honjo*  
Grand Master of the  
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of the Rosicrucian Order.

**A** FORMER GRAND Master of the Rosicrucian Order, Chris Warnken, once wrote: *“After many years of daily struggle to evolve..., I have a strong conviction that the root cause of the majority of our difficulties is unquestionably the ego. The ego is very skilful at masking its identity and only occasionally is it obvious... that the ego is to blame. More frequently however, the ego is concealed*

*behind an ingenious mask of self-sacrifice, patriotism, health or indeed a host of other clever disguises.”*

Zen Buddhism concurs that the ego is *the* great stumbling block in life. In fact, dealing with the ego lies at the very heart of Buddhism. The Rosicrucian teachings pursue the issue of the ego in much detail and present practical advice for reducing its dominance or even eliminating it entirely. In this article I will be exploring





the many similarities that exist between the Rosicrucian teachings and Zen on the subject of the ego.

## A Brief History of Zen

Elsewhere in this magazine you will find an article by Bill Anderson about the origins of Zen, so I will not go into too much detail here. I will however, give a brief history of Buddhism and Zen. The founder of Buddhism is known as the *Buddha Sakyamuni* (from *Sakya* where the Buddha was born) or *Gotama Siddhartha* in Pali, an ancient language of India. Gotama (also spelled as Gautama) comes from the Sanskrit *gō*, meaning “*bright light*”, and *tama* meaning “*darkness*”, presumably then meaning a/the “*bright light [dispelling] darkness*”, very apt, considering the huge influence of peace and illumination that Buddhism has brought to humanity.

According to certain Buddhist literature, the Buddha experienced the *Great Enlightenment* (*Bodhi* in Sanskrit) in the early morning of 8<sup>th</sup> December (in the Gregorian calendar) while watching the pre-dawn rise of Venus in the heavens. When it happened he is said to have remarked: “*How strange! Mountains, rivers, grasses and woods..., they are all enlightened.*” From the Rosicrucian perspective, what the Buddha experienced was what can be called “*Ultimate Reality*”, namely, consciousness of the indivisible unity of the Universe where Venus, he and Nature all



around him were manifested in the form of supreme harmony. Of course, as mystics we know that such an experience transcends any objective description or logic we can engage in, and I will return to this later.

After his enlightenment, the Buddha strove for another 45 years to help others to reach this same experience. Many disciples gathered around him and through their monastic practices they sought to experience ultimate reality. Over the millennia, the experiences of each succeeding generation of disciples was checked face to face, Master to disciple, resulting in new Masters emerging from the disciples, Masters who continued the lineage of instruction and indeed continue doing so today. More than 2,000 years have passed from

the first generation of disciples and Masters to the one in existence today.

The Master of the 28<sup>th</sup> generation was a famous Indian by the name of Bodhidharma, and it was he, according to legend, who founded Zen Buddhism. He is commonly portrayed with a beard and earrings; and in Japan, a doll representing this illumined man is a very popular children’s toy. It is in fact a symbol of patience, for the dolls are so constructed that no matter how they are knocked about, they always right themselves..., most frustrating!

While Bodhidharma is said to have transferred Zen Buddhism from India to China, it was the 51<sup>st</sup> successor in the lineage, the great Japanese Master Dogen, who for all practical purposes, brought Zen across to Japan from China. Zen has widely and strongly influenced Japanese culture. Gardening, architecture, the tea ceremony, flower arrangement, archery and judo are but a few of the activities upon which Zen has left a lasting and beneficial mark.

## Master Dogen

But let me return to my subject: the Rosicrucian teachings and Zen. The 13<sup>th</sup> Century Zen master Dogen, who founded the Japanese *Soto Zen* school, is a good guide for exploring the many similarities that exist between the Rosicrucian teachings and Zen concerning the ego. In his main literary work entitled “*Shobo-Genzo*”, which means “*The Right-Dharma-Eye Treasury*”, Dogen expresses a profound understanding of the relationship between the human being and the Universe. This insight was acquired only



after many years of arduous Zen training which included the practice of *Zazen*, the seated form of Zen meditation. Master Dogen wrote:

*“To learn Buddha’s truth is to learn one’s self. To learn one’s self is to forget one’s self. To forget one’s self is to be confirmed by all dharmas. To be confirmed by all dharmas is to let one’s body and mind, and the body and mind of the external world fall away. All trace of enlightenment disappears, and this traceless enlightenment continues without end.”*

## To Learn One’s Self

Taking the first sentence of this paragraph, *“To learn Buddha’s truth is to learn one’s self,”* one is reminded of the legendary injunction over the entrance of the temple at Delphi: *“Know thyself.”* And that most certainly is what Rosicrucians seek too, for the main task of every true Rosicrucian is to build up a clear channel of communication between the dull mundane outer self and the radiant, sacred, inner Self. Many subjects in the Rosicrucian teachings deal specifically with this quest for self-realisation. Master Dogen taught the same, namely, that learning about one’s Self is the surest way there is of discovering the true nature of our existence and the Universe.

## To Forget One’s Self

The other sentences in the quote seem enigmatic at a first glance, especially the second one: *“To learn one’s self is to forget one’s self.”* But from personal reflection and the practice of Zen, I have learnt that this concerns the ego; for forgetting one’s self implies surely the abandonment of the ego if one wants to know the true nature of one’s being?

Several questions arise. First, what exactly is the ego? There are so many varied definitions in



ictionaries that they frankly confuse rather than assist us. Strangely though, it is not that difficult to conceive of a state of being devoid of an ego. Let’s use the example of a professional skier. It’s a foggy day, the ski slope is steep and bumpy, and here and there the snow is compressed into dangerous ice plates. The positioning of slalom gates is a specialist occupation requiring the skill of an expert in order to minimise the risk of injury. A world-class skier is waiting at the start gate for the signal to go. Nervous energy courses through his tense though fully prepared body and he

**He is no longer aware of his body or mind, and in his field of awareness, in his reality, he is intimately merged with the universe.**

knows he will require all his skill and concentration to safely reach the finish line.

The signal sounds and in an instant he’s off. With the wind searing his face, he hears the sound of his skis carving the hard snow. He feels the elasticity of the skis but he can hardly see the slope ahead of him because of the thick fog. His balance is constantly disturbed, adjusted and readjusted with split-second precision as he encounters unexpected obstacles and changes in the course. But he recovers quickly because of his well-honed skills. His actions are automatic, as if something deep within the subconscious has taken full control. If even for a second he had to think about his technique, his actions would be too slow to cope and the consequences could be fatal.

Before he left the start gate, his consciousness had reached a degree of separation from his environment. There was just him and the slope, his ability and the difficult conditions ahead of him. But all thoughts were instantly blown away when he pushed away from the gate, when conditions immediately demanded his full attention. It was at that moment that the separation between himself and his environment ceased to exist and something deep within took over.

Now, speeding down the slope, he is no longer aware of his body or mind, and in his field of awareness, in his reality, he is intimately merged with the universe. We all eventually learn through experience that the only universe we can ever know is the universe of our personal reality. And the ultimate such reality is a universe completely devoid of the ego. There is oneness and harmony, and in this state, one can achieve the best one is capable of. One knows at such moments the enormity of one’s true capabilities and has reached at least a partial understanding of the meaning of Zen Master Dogen’s words: *“To learn one’s self is to forget one’s self.”*







*Bodhidharma, by Yoshitoshi, 1887.*

## To be Confirmed by all Dharmas

And now to the third sentence of the quotation given earlier: *“To forget one’s self is to be confirmed by all Dharmas.”* The Sanskrit word *Dharma* means “reality”, or things and phenomena that are real to us in the deepest sense possible. The realisation of the skier’s excellent performance depends not only on his skills but also on his full integration into the environment in which he is skiing. The world is inseparable from the skier and the skier is inseparable from the world.

If the skier were to start thinking of other competitors or to begin noticing the crowds cheering him on, or if he suddenly became aware of the dangers of the situation, or even if he started being distracted by an itch, his concentration would break in an instant, control for the

*“Since both consciousness and reality change, nothing is as permanent as it may seem.”*

movement of his body would pass from his subconscious mind to the cumbersome outer intellect, and the race would be lost.

A centipede could not walk if he had to think about how his legs needed to move. Similarly, the harmony of the skier disappears and his performance deteriorates the instant his intellect is allowed to take charge. And herein lies the ego in the broadest sense of the word, and we may conclude that it is the ego, that outermost framework of the mind, that prevents us, more than anything else, from effective action in life.

Just as fish do not notice the water they swim in, or we humans do not notice the air we breathe, so do we rarely notice the presence of the ego. The ego, without a shadow of doubt, prevents us from fulfilling our full potential, and hampers us severely in gaining an understanding of our true relationship with the Cosmic. Indeed it prevents us from understanding that at the very deepest level of our being, we and the Cosmic are inseparably one.

## Mumyo

What causes the ego to exist? Buddhism says that *“Mumyo”* is the fundamental cause of the ego and of all suffering in our lives. *Mumyo* means the ignorance we carry about with us through myriad incarnations, and specifically, it means ignorance of the “two basic truths.”

## Syogyo-Muzyo

The first of these truths is *“Syogyo-Muzyo.”* *Syogyo* means “all that is perceived”, while *Muzyo* means “change or the changeable.” Together, these words mean: *“everything perceived is changeable”*, or to put it differently, *“nothing we perceive remains unchanged forever.”* How very Rosicrucian!

The ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus wrote: *“All matter is becoming,”* and we know that the law of matter is above all else a law of change. Consciousness changes constantly; it is in a permanent state of flux. As one of the monograph lessons from the Rosicrucian curriculum says: *“Since both consciousness and reality change, nothing is as permanent as it may seem.”*

We have many strong attachments to things in life, and our concepts seem unchangeable..., at least for some periods of time. These temporarily unchangeable things can be our homes, our status, our physical beauty or strength, our neighbours, lovers, opinions, beliefs, reasoning abilities, etc. Our strong attachment to these things firmly supports the existence of the ego. If, like brief though intense flashes of lightning, we were to realise the true nature of the ever-changing Universe..., and if we were to realise that it is impossible to truly possess anything..., we would free ourselves from these strong attachments and





*The technique of candle gazing.*

the ego would as a result be vastly diminished. One part of the written teachings of the Rosicrucian Order says just this, though in a slightly different way:

*“Although through man-made laws we can compensate each other and thereby obtain certain rights to have the legal privilege of acquiring something for our exclusive use, we are nevertheless always indebted to the Cosmic for such benefits.*

*“We are obligated to the Cosmic because it is through the manifestations of universal laws that all such things are made possible. Even the inspired human intelligence of the inventor or designer of something is the result of Cosmic enlightenment.”*

## Our Guusi Attachments

Returning to our skier, he is in the oneness, the bare-bones no-ego Universe. But needless to say, not every skier reaches that great enlightenment immediately, and this is because human attachments are so persistent and last many incarnations. Buddhism compares these attachments to “*Guusi*”, namely the fibres of the lotus root which are very hard to cut.

On the other hand, our skier for example achieves the no-ego state almost exclusively through his preparatory period of concentration, followed by

a release of intellectual control of that concentration at the precise moment he leaves the start gate. Zen shows that a state devoid of the ego is a natural quality of the deeper self. If repeated no-ego experiences are allowed to accumulate within us, a point is eventually reached when the erroneous paradigm of the ego is blown away forever. Practice is all we need: practice, practice, practice.

From the foregoing example, it seems therefore that some purely mundane activities can lead us to the no-ego state relatively easily. Here are a few examples:

- Listening to sounds, say music or mantra sounds, with the detached deep concentration of the inner self.
- Doing various outdoor sports which require the sort of delicate balance achievable only through abandonment of the outer intellect to the higher inner faculties.
- Acting or portraying another personality, animal or even an inanimate thing like a cascading mountain stream, and getting deep into the role.
- And then there is the Rosicrucian technique of gazing at a candle flame or frankly anything else which attracts our consciousness, and allowing the mind to enter a state of neutrality as it watches.

Many similar activities have been arranged in various forms in the written teachings of AMORC. The mystical, as opposed to intellectual form of concentration that is used during these activities, has the power to break the illusions the ego has created for us.

## Syoho-Muga

The second truth of Buddhism is “*Syoho-Muga*.” *Syoho* means “*all things*” and *Mu* denotes “*negation*.” The word *ga* is ambiguous however. One of its meanings is the “*everlasting independent personality of the soul*.” If we use this as the meaning of *ga*, we gain some sense of the meaning of the entire phrase, and here it is: “*...in the universe there is no such thing as an eternal, separated soul personality, for it is always changing and dependent*.” In other words, no soul, and hence no expression of that soul (what Rosicrucians call the “*soul personality*”) remains as it is forever, and is ever dependent on its ultimate source. This agrees with the Rosicrucian viewpoint, for concerning the soul and its attendant expression on earth (the soul personality), another part of the Rosicrucian teachings explains it as follows:



*“To the Rosicrucian, the soul is always connected to and is a part of the great Universal or Cosmic Soul, and is therefore never actually individualised. It does not belong to us, but to the Cosmic; it is not separated, but united. It is not independent, but dependent.”*

If we thoroughly realise the temporal nature of the individuality, the “I” or ego can no longer manifest. One of the Rosicrucian pamphlets we publish speaks of eliminating the ego as “...forgetting misleading, inflated theories about individual personality; in other words, eliminating personal individuality.”

The remaining part of Master Dogen’s quote says: “To be confirmed by all dharmas is to let one’s body and mind, and the body and mind of the external world fall away. All trace of enlightenment disappears, and this traceless enlightenment continues without end.” To understand this, we must delve deeper into the deep meaning behind the expression *Syoho-Muga*. As previously explained, the word *ga* has several meanings, one of which denotes the “fixed characteristics of things.” Applying this meaning of *ga* to *Syoho-Muga*, we get the following sentence: “Nothing in the universe has any inherently fixed characteristics.” But what exactly is meant by this? And why is it so important?

**For those without ego, the true nature of worldly passions, angers and foolishness is in itself Nirvana.**

### The Honourable Monk Sariputra

We have a clue in the *Yuima-Sutra* which was written by an unknown author in India in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup> Century BCE. This very old sutra relates a beautiful and inspiring story about the inherent characteristics of things.

*A heavenly maiden lived in a house where Buddhist monks held their assembly. She listened to their discourses and was so delighted and moved that she revealed her body to them and sprinkled heavenly flowers on them. The flowers that fell on the clothes of some of them did not cling and fell on the ground, whereas the flowers that fell on others clung to their clothing. They tried to remove the flowers from their clothes by their supernatural powers but they could not. Eventually she said to one of them:*

*“Honourable monk Sariputra, Why are you trying to shake off these flowers?” He replied: “We retired into Buddhism and are contented with honest poverty, so it is not appropriate for us to decorate our clothes with flowers.” She asserted: “Honourable monk Sariputra, you should not*

*say this, for flowers are in accord with the law of Reality; flowers neither think nor judge. But you think and judge that they are not appropriate. For those who have retired into Buddhism and are living with ultimate truth..., evaluation and judgment are not appropriate with the law of Reality.*

*“Honourable monk Sariputra, You are evaluating and judging ultimate reality. Evaluation and judgment is not suitable for this. You should observe the monks to whom the flowers did not cling; they neither evaluated nor judged. For example an evil spirit watches for a chance to possess one who harbours fears. Similarly, he who fears birth, death and reincarnation, allows his ego to be strongly attached to the passions, to the things that his five senses perceive. But if he renounces his fears and abandons his passions for the worldly created things, his passions for the things of perception cannot affect him.*

*“The flowers clung only to those who are not yet free from the patterns of thinking and action that was formed by strong attachments to worldly things. But they did not cling to the clothes of the others who are free from all these patterns.”*

*Sariputra asked: “Honorable heavenly maiden, is not the abandonment of passions, anger and foolishness needed for the attainment of Nirvana?” She replied: “Only for those with inflated egos is there a need to follow the teachings that say that we must abandon worldly passions, angers and foolishness in order to attain Nirvana. For those without ego, the true nature of worldly passions, angers and foolishness is in itself Nirvana.”*

### Nirvana

But can passion, anger and foolishness really amount to Nirvana? This brave assertion relates the fact that



Sariputra has many frameworks falling in two categories. One is sacred and the other is worldly. For him, flowers are worldly and do not belong to the sacred world. The passions, anger and foolishness referred to are not part of the sacred either and therefore belong to the secular world. They are different from Nirvana which can only exist in the sacred realm.

But according to the heavenly maiden who made fun of him, flowers have no inherent fixed qualities like *vulgar* or *sacred*. Passion in itself does not have the quality of vulgarity, just as Nirvana does not in itself have any inherent qualities of sanctity. These natures or classifications exist only in the mind of Sariputra, so the things, desires and emotions exist independently of whatever judgment is made of him. They have no inherent qualities apart from those we ourselves create.

So, for some people, flowers are ostentatious when worn on their clothes, even though those same flowers can be offered to the Buddha as symbols of the beauty of the sacred world. Some poisons when used in minute quantities, as for example in homeopathy, can be used as highly effective healing agents. Similarly the passions, which so often confuse us, can be converted instead into great compassion because they have no inherently fixed natures. This highlights the other meaning of *Syoho-Muga*, namely that “*nothing in the universe has any inherently fixed characteristics.*”

If we insist on avoiding vulgarity and seek sanctity at all costs, we have a form of attachment to the ego. And if we leave the worldly life and seek Nirvana, this too is a form of attachment which we have to cast off in order to realise the true nature of ultimate reality. To put it another way, we tend to construct paradigms consisting of two opposite categories or qualities. Examples are the sacred and the profane, heaven and earth, good and bad, the passions and Nirvana, objects and ourselves, body and mind, actuality and reality, outside and inside, space and time. These are convenient for some phases of reasoning, but they are after all merely concepts that we ourselves have created. As frameworks, they do not belong to ultimate reality.

If we wish to reach that ultimate reality of God or Nirvana, we must cast off all frameworks and paradigms and stop being misled by the ego. In fact, we even have to cast off Nirvana itself. We have to cast off our concepts of God or ultimate reality if they are mere categories or concepts, for they hold us back from the actual experience of this ultimate reality.

For analogy, suppose you tasted sea urchin eggs for the first time. If you had read or heard about them before, and knew what creature they came from, you would probably not have enjoyed their taste as much as your ignorance of these facts would have guaranteed. That is why Zen Buddhism pays special attention to

the limitations of language. If we use words to describe something, we inevitably separate ourselves from the reality of what we are attempting to describe. We regard things as objects, as if they existed outside of us.

## Pointing at the Moon

Zen Masters often use the metaphor of an index finger pointing at the moon. With their characteristic simple though deep wisdom, they warn us of the subtle danger of confusing *enlightenment*, symbolised by the moon, with the *description* of enlightenment, symbolised by the finger pointing at the moon. Experiencing enlightenment is not the same as describing it. This is why most schools of mysticism affirm that ultimate reality transcends all intellectual concepts and defies objective description. And so it is with the Rosicrucian tradition as well. Relatively little is conveyed directly in words, but a great wealth of experience is bestowed upon us through simple rituals, a fragment of which I will shortly be quoting from.

We would do well to take heed of the two truths of Buddhism that have been covered so far, namely *Syogyo-Muzyo: nothing in existence is unchangeable* and *Syoho-Muga: nothing in the universe has any inherently fixed characteristics*. The Rosicrucian teachings and Zen agree on these two points and we should adjust our passions and attachments accordingly. By understanding *Syogyo-Muzyo*, and cultivating the experiences of *Syoho-Muga* through deliberate actions, and by pursuing our daily activities like the skier in our example, we are led to the wonderful realisation of the no-ego perfect Universe.

## Being Confirmed by all Dharmas

Let us now analyse the final part of the paragraph of Zen



*The poisonous plant 'Belladonna' is used in homeopathic medicine.*





*Zen Masters often use the metaphor of an index finger pointing at the moon.*

Master Dogen: *“To be confirmed by all Dharmas is to let one’s body and mind, and the body and mind of the external world, fall away. All trace of enlightenment disappears, and this traceless enlightenment continues without end.”*

These words are so profound that I simply cannot reduce or analyse their meaning any further. They say it all so precisely, and it cannot be clarified or expanded upon. Suffice it to say that every time I read these sentences I am overwhelmed by the most sublime emotion of deep attunement with the Cosmic. What I would like to do instead is to quote a brief passage concerning the Cosmic from a Rosicrucian ritual:

*“All things are within You..., and from You they continually spring forth. Cosmic Being, You are self-sufficient, for You are both creator and consumer.”*

*“Within You, things have no estimate, for nothing is without place, nothing diminishes, nothing is older or younger, lesser or greater than another.”*

*“Though You are ever changing, Your complexities are nameless. Neither air, fire, water, earth nor life exist by the distinctions by which mortals know them. Yet they are eternally contained in Your essence.”*

For the sake of humanity, for the future of our world, it is so important that we and all others on our beloved planet experience as soon as possible that no-ego, perfect and inseparable Universe that resides within us. Yes, this must be the foundation of that peace based on the Great Compassion that Buddhists call *“Zhi”* and that Rosicrucians know as *Peace Profound*.

If the realisation is achieved, there will be no *I*; indeed, the Universe will become the *I*. Every person will help others in distress, with no special concern for reward or even recognition, just as the left hand cares for the wound on the right hand, for it is part of the same wounded body. We are all part of the same body, the great body of the Universe, the great Cosmic reality.

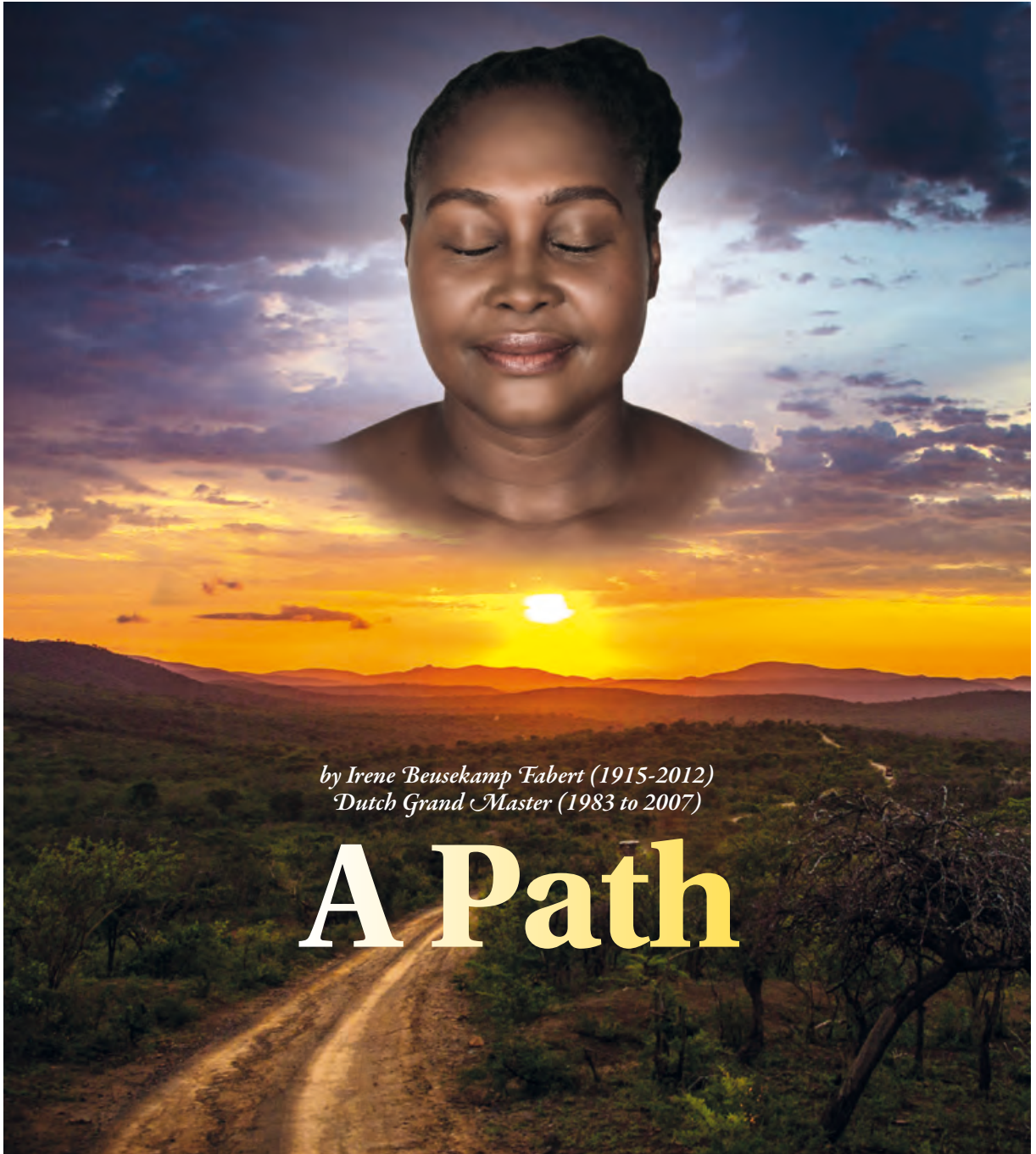
## Close Friends

I have now reached the end, and as Rosicrucians will no doubt agree, the Rosicrucian teachings and Zen are close friends. They see the same Cosmic reality and agree in principle on the two fundamental truths of Buddhism: *Syogyo-Muzyo* (nothing in existence is unchangeable) and *Syoho-Muga* (nothing in the universe has any inherently fixed characteristics.) Through these two great truths, practitioners of the art of Zen seek to attain realisation of the one perfect, no-ego Universe. And that is so very Rosicrucian!

*“All things are within You..., and from You they continually spring forth. Cosmic Being, You are self-sufficient, for You are both creator and consumer.”*

Many Rosicrucian aspirants and Zen practitioners the world over will one day achieve the experience of the no-ego inseparable reality and learn to live by it. From the Great Compassion to all living creatures, may the Rosicrucian Order and Zen fulfil their respective, though common, missions of bringing about a bright new era of elevated human consciousness.





*by Irene Beusekamp Fabert (1915-2012)  
Dutch Grand Master (1983 to 2007)*

# A Path

**T**HESE are long years that I have been in this world. I was five years old when I went to class for the first time. I learnt, studied and studied more and more, and now I know so much that I no longer know what I know. And like the French writer Montaigne (1533-1592) I say: *Que sais-je?* What do I know?

The interpreters of Montaigne have for a long time thought that by voicing that rhetorical question he was

expressing his scepticism and disillusionment. He was only a young child when he was speaking Latin fluently. Later he studied philosophy and law, travelled widely and carried out public duties. But it was the phenomenon of 'being human' which increasingly held his interest.

And so it was that he eventually retired to his château where he devoted himself to the study of mankind. Perhaps because he lived alone, he became the object of his own observations which he recorded in his *Essays*. It





Montaigne (1533-1592).

was in silence that he found that which, for him, was the most important: his Inner Self, which he called his 'back shop.' In the form of essays, he produced a large volume of writings about mankind, and yet he professed he never knew who or what it is. "What do I know?" he said. In spite of many years of study, mankind remained for him a mystery. As for possible spiritual experiences in the depths of himself, he always kept silent about them.

### My Own Experiences

If you don't mind, I'm now going to revert to my own experiences. Of all that I've learnt, I've acquired a fairly

**Adepts on the Path, let me greet you with this eternal affirmation: The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.**

extensive knowledge, but that which I really know doesn't come from what I accumulated in my brain, but from the most profound depths of myself, during the short or long moments of pure silence. Those moments where all is quiet in oneself, where it seems we're enveloped by an ethereal veil, and where all of a sudden our Inner Master manifests and confirms what the great Master said so long ago: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." The Master, the Inner Master, God. A while back I wrote a meditation of words, of expressions, of phrases that I used to read or that I used to hear, and which became engraved in my heart. Here they are:

Adepts on the Path, let me greet you with this eternal affirmation: The Kingdom of Heaven is within you. The current illusion of mankind is the overestimation of the intellect which has brought so much to us and which has made possible, thanks to some miraculous techniques a total change of our conditions of life. Humanity is under the influence of a technological development which seems unable anymore to come to a standstill. New discoveries

are being achieved in all fields. The universe is revealing its secrets to science and we're wearing out and using up all the treasures and resources of our Mother Earth.

The World is no longer in balance. While the western countries, greedy *To Have* (they no longer know how to conjugate the verb *To Be*) are pushed more and more to acquire totally useless products, the other part of the world suffers from hunger and remains deprived of what's most essential for life. Isn't it about time for us to realise the delusions of our intellectual evolution and commit ourselves to new ways, these ways which are emerging more and more and which from all time the wise men and women of all civilisations pointed out to be in the scope of one science: the science of the soul?

How odd that scholars know details about the tiniest of insects they can't see with the naked eye, yet don't even know the why and how of their own existence? Why do geneticists know so much about plants, animals and humans but don't look into the mystery of their own beings and into the characteristics of their own persona? How is it that mankind can cross the universe in all senses, even land on the Moon, but isn't able to find the path which leads us to ourselves?

"The Kingdom of Heaven is within you". Adepts of the path, permit me to repeat to you this age-old message. It's the message of the boundless smile of the Sphinx which rises up calm and serene on the sands of Egypt. It's the message formulated in different terms by the German mystic of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, Meister Eckhart: "God is at the centre of Man." St Thomas Aquinas and Jacob Boehme gave expression to the same thing in their copious

writings which aren't always easy to read, but based on genuine experience, an experience which is also possible for mankind in this new age.

Our era is precisely the one where divine values are gaining clarity and where the spiritual life is becoming as significant and real as the material life, the one where



The serene face of the Sphinx of Giza.





Meister Eckhart.

the term 'initiation' again finds its first significance: a beginning, a new beginning. And this is that which must be, since every creature is a part of the universal Spirit which is at the origin of our world, the Spirit where eternal Love, infinite Wisdom and indestructible Peace abides.

## Initiation

In the Mystery Schools of the pre-Christian civilisations, initiation was considered an extremely important act. At the end of the ceremonies of the Eleusinian mysteries in ancient Greece, the last words that initiates heard were: "*May Peace be in you*", after which they resumed their respective paths, souls peaceful and hearts filled with joy. Initiation was for them a profound awakening into that which is genuine. It was the supreme accomplishment of their spiritual life and whoever didn't make it to that experience was not a complete being.

If this interior experience was possible two thousand years before the Common Era, it should be possible two thousand years into the Common Era too. During these four thousand years, the fundamental nature of mankind has not changed, nor their search for themselves..., Adepts of the Path who aspire to meeting the Divine. In their true reality, the one which was and will always be, men and women are spiritual beings even though they live in material bodies. Our senses, which play tricks of all sorts on us, are the reason why we confuse our true Self with our material body. The Divine doesn't surround us only during our earliest infancy, but all through life. We don't know it yet or don't know it any more.

Behind the person we think we are, there is a second person we don't see: our real Self, which existed already before thoughts and desires took possession of us. Behind our body of flesh and blood exists a radiant and sublime conscience. Our true life flows out in the depths of our heart and has no place in the superficial mask of the personality we show to the world. Adept of the Path, you are the heir of a hidden treasure in the deep recesses of

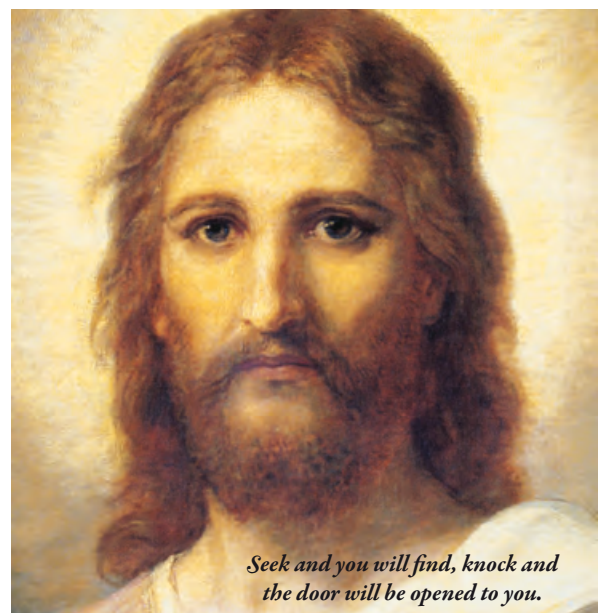
your own nature. The Kingdom of heaven is within you. Those who, secluded in their own silence set out to find themselves, are not dreamers. They are only doing what each one must do at a certain phase of their evolution.

The way may be long or short, but they keep their spiritual eyes wide open and listen to the voice which speaks within them. One day, their great Self will be revealed to them, and they will be on the verge of Eternity. If the door of our soul opens itself for one second, one minute or one hour, the revelation will be complete. Neither bitter suffering nor a heavy burden can destroy this knowledge, a knowledge which cannot be translated into words. Anyone who, at one time, has felt their innermost being to be dissolved and to be merged in the infinite, knows that this cannot be expressed. It's the illumination of the spirit and of the heart, that which is

**If this interior experience was possible two thousand years before the Common Era, it should be possible two thousand years into the Common Era too.**

the most miraculous in the life of each man and woman.

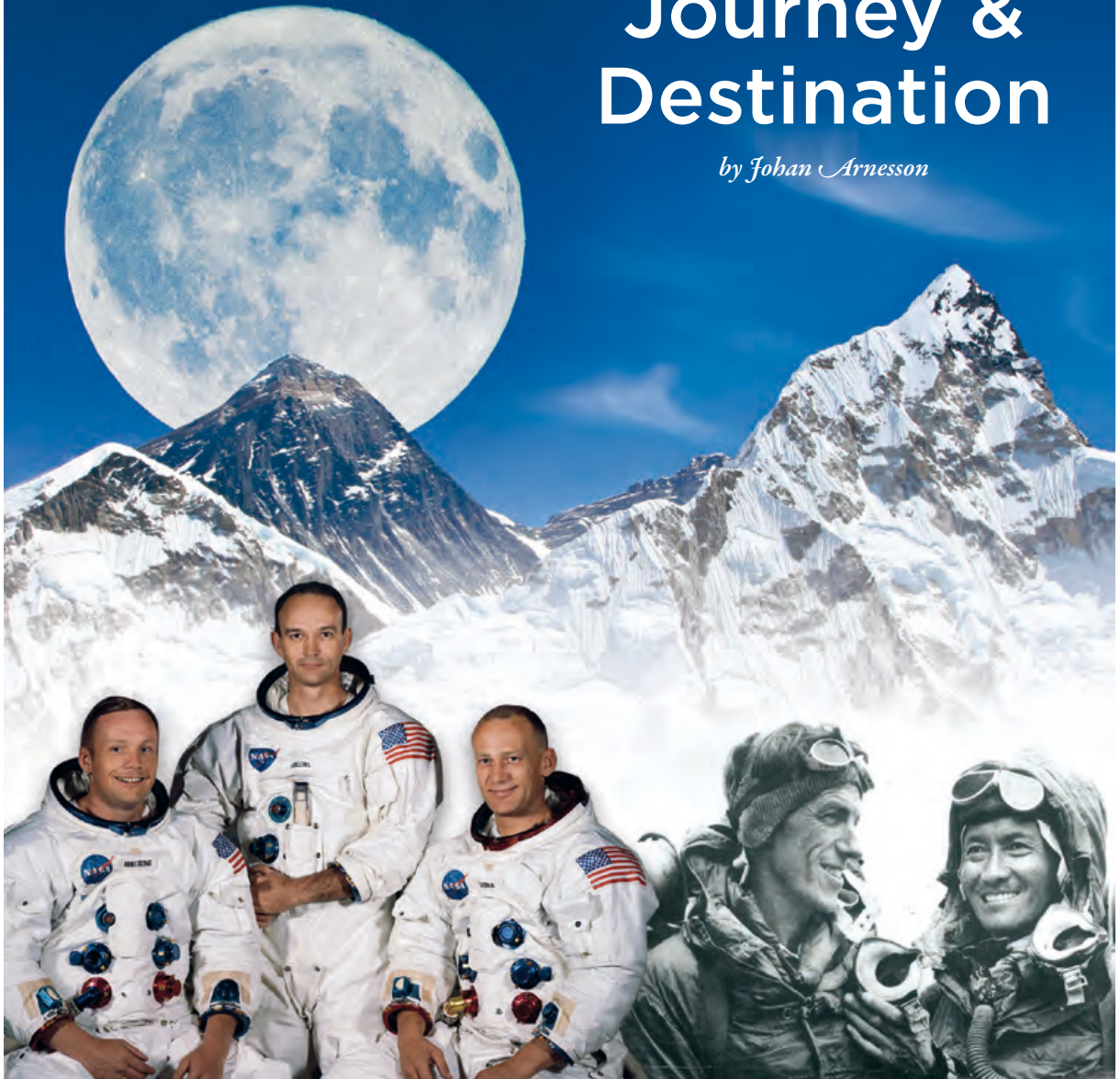
Look for your Self, find your true Self and you will know the sense of life and the mystery of the universe will be revealed to you. Think about the words of the Master of Galilee: "*Seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you.*" Discover that you are one part of an infinite Life which expresses itself in Light and in Love. "*He who knows his own nature, knows Paradise*" said a pupil of Confucius. In other words: "*The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.*"





# Journey & Destination

by Johan Arnesson



**R**EMEMBER THE Apollo space programme of the 1960s? Of course you do, and what exciting times they were. The Apollo programme was created for one reason only: to send a man to the surface of the moon and to return him safely to earth. It is a welcome testament to changing times that in those days there were only 'hims' when it came to spaceflight, while by now, thanks to the Space Shuttle, we've had many outstanding woman astronauts too.

Whether it's Neil Armstrong bouncing around on the moon or Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay

reaching the summit of Mount Everest for the first time, they each prepared for a journey, took the journey, and finally reached their goal. The goal is often touted as the be-all and end-all of any major mission, when that shouldn't be the case. What about the time before the final moment of glory? To be honest, much more thought needs to be given to the preparatory stage, and especially the *journey* to the summit of achievement that deserves our greatest accolade, not just those final moments when the summit is reached.

Think of the athletes at the recent Winter Olympics.



Every one of them came to compete fiercely and to win medals. But the years of long, arduous training that preceded the final performances that took them to victory must surely be more relevant than the actual feats of winning themselves? Those years of toil and tears were the real victory, for without the hundreds of little details and techniques that had to be mastered, there would have been no victory. And inevitably, when the excitement of the race is over, questions no doubt sometimes arise: *“Is that it? Is that all there is? I spent years training just for this and it was finished in just a few intense minutes. Apart from my brief moment of glory, I’m still the same person. What’s changed?”*

During the time of greatest effort in perfecting one’s skills, the overriding goal was to accomplish the final task, to reach the end. And then the end came and it wasn’t quite as one had expected. There was an initial euphoria and sense of relief at the accomplishment, but not long after, on the bus back home after the farewells and the long flight home, a sort of gender-neutral version of post natal depression set in. Was it really worth all the time and effort? Were those years of sacrifice worth just a measly bronze medal? It’s a physical thing for sure, so say the doctors; just a natural reaction to a sudden release from long-term stress. But it doesn’t feel that way when one’s in the dumps.

**What do we find at the destination that we can’t find at any point during the journey, or for that matter even at the starting point?**

### Don’t Confuse Things

Are we confusing the goal with the effort needed to reach it? Yes we often confuse the *destination* with the *journey* getting there, those intense years of training and sacrifice when it would have been so easy to give up and choose an easier life. By emphasising the destination to the almost complete exclusion of the journey that’s so crucial to our success, we’re missing a fundamental point: the journey is often, *indeed most of the time*, more important than the destination itself. Success may appear to us as an illusion, but we know, sometimes painfully, that the journey was far from illusory.

We’ve all had small goals we want to reach, whether it was a better job, a financial windfall, a better house, etc. But when those goals were reached, were we really happy with the outcome? More than likely the feeling of satisfaction was welcome to begin with, but it dissipated with time, and before we knew it, what we had yearned for previously became what we expected life to give us.



*A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.*

On each occasion, the destination was a glimmer of light in the distance, but once reached, it was quickly forgotten.

An intense focus on the destination, while almost completely ignoring the process that allows us to reach our destination, causes us to diminish the value of the journey and its capacity for bringing about real and long lasting beneficial change to ourselves and our attitudes. There is the potential for great value in any journey, if only we are prepared to learn from the lessons that directly flow from it.

What do we find at the destination that we can’t find at any point during the journey, or for that matter even at the starting point? Thinking of the winter Olympics again, we may win and bask a moment in our years-in-the-making achievement, holding the medal up high, but by the next day our ski tracks will be gone, and as far as nature is concerned, we were never there. Given that the euphoria of victory is so transient, surely there’s room for other moments

of transient euphoria with every passing day on the journey to the win? The finale is only a small part of a piece of music, the epilogue only a fraction of a book, the destination only a step on the path to the destination.

### The First Step

An old Chinese proverb begins: *“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”* Every journey begins with that first step, and every step on the path can be considered as important as the first one, provided it is taken as deliberately and seriously. It’s easy to stop when the destination is all we’re striving for and the goal seems impossibly far away. The journey begins, progresses and ends with every step we take, and the journey is nothing short of a long series of small triumphs, each one as important as the rest, each one linearly leading to the next. We never really fail, but we do from time to time stop trying. And we stop trying when we have nothing to strive for but a distant goal, barely seen.



## The Path of Life

Preoccupation with the end causes us to overlook the excitement, the challenge, the satisfaction and importance of each step, each question, each minor discovery. It is the thrill of possibility that spurs us on, an excitement fed by the power and momentum of the journey itself. We can't get on with it until we don't keep going. Once started, we must see the journey through to its completion.

"I'm an idealist," wrote the poet Carl Sandburg. "I don't know where I'm going but I'm on my way." Sometimes you just have to get moving, even when the way is not clear. Anticipation and the excitement of progress will keep you going, but it takes a spark to light the flame, like that first ignition of the spark plug that starts a car engine. *Every step should be a first step!*

### Self Realisation

Former Secretary-General of the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld once wrote, "*The longest journey is the journey inwards of he who has chosen his destiny, who has started upon his quest for the source of his being.*" The journey, any journey, any project, is a journey toward the realisation of self; and such a journey is strewn with pitfalls, obstacles and resistance. The search for self-worth and self-understanding is painful but necessary, part of the process of becoming a whole, integrated person.

Every project, every process, every striving is a step inward, a plunge into the depths of individual personality, a thread woven into the fabric of the human being. When a journey ends, we will have learnt a bit more about our possibilities and limitations, our abilities and inabilities. And we are eager to press ahead, to know more, to start again, to begin the next worthwhile journey. The late Peter Boardman, an outstanding British mountaineer, wrote in his book, *The Shining Mountain*: "*Today's frontiers are not of promised lands, of uncrossed passes and mysterious valleys beyond. Only the mountaineers' inner self remains uncharted.*"

The journey is an attempt to scale the spirit of a mountaineer, to ascend the summit of inner knowledge; and it can be a lonely trip. People are often insensitive and intolerant of those who pursue the road apart from the crowd, who travel a path that veers from the common thoroughfare. The question they often ask is: "*Where can that path possibly lead? It seems to go nowhere.*" But that is their perception, and it is limited by a lack of sufficient understanding, a myopic view of another's destination. Every journey has by default a destination, and every step takes us a bit closer to the end. Once underway, the goal is to press on, and at all times hold the vision of the destination in mind. But don't do so at the expense of the steps in-between.

Like the protagonist in Herman Hesse's mystical novel, *The Journey to the East*, we all eventually come to realise that the main journey we take in life, is never ending. In fact it is our very life itself. The journey is a process of becoming, not a single assault on a single goal or mountain. Though the journey never really ends, it



T S Elliot

sometimes brings us back to the place where we began, with a new appreciation or a deeper understanding, causing us to, as T S Eliot put it "...know the place for the first time." You never conquer a mountain, you never conquer your Inner Self; you seek it afresh every day, every step along the way.

Tomorrow there will be another goal, another challenge, another journey. The next one may be harder, take a bit longer, be less accessible. But the true seeker knows the goal will eventually be reached, and knows intimately the road leading to it. Every destination is the starting point for another journey. Every chapter completed means a new chapter or a new book must begin. We can't be content with the destination alone. We can't rest forever on the results of that one big project.

None of this is to say that goals and destinations are unimportant. The summit is one of the reasons for climbing the mountain. It provides us with another view, another perspective. If our intention is not the absolute top, we will not progress very far along the way. The destination is the culmination of the adventure, the pinnacle of triumph,

### The summit is one of the reasons for climbing the mountain

the final, and sometimes most difficult, step along the way. We need not feel a sense of emptiness, disappointment or disillusionment when the present project or journey has ended, not if we've worked hard along the way and learned the lessons of the journey.

The destination can be sweet, the accomplishment pure, and the mountaineering spirit challenged if we understand the purpose of the journey and the value to us of the destination. It is a part of the reward for coming this far. We can climb the mountain and peer over the ridge with a sense of satisfaction. We can take time to reflect and determine the course of the next chapter, for the triumph of reaching the destination is but the prelude to another.





# The Dark Valleys of Life

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## Creative Alienation

by *Mary Wilson*

**M**Y LITTLE BOY contracted meningitis a few days before his third birthday. It was a terrible time, watching him scream with pain.

After two days in intensive care, he seemed to stabilise but then suddenly relapsed. My husband and I were beside ourselves with fear and grief: fear for what the specialist had gently warned us could happen, and grief over the possible brain damage that we thought may already have occurred.

And while this was happening, I still had to attend to work dealing with important briefs as part of my legal career, while my husband had to be on-site dealing with problems at the refinery where he was the chemical

engineer in charge. Two fast-paced careers and a seriously ill child does not a happy family make.

Several other issues had occurred in short succession in the months leading up to the illness, all of them severe knocks to my confidence. Although competent and hard working as a lawyer, I had come up against a block in my professional career. I was dealing with far more cases than I should have, and the results were at times at best mediocre, no matter how hard I tried to improve. I was facing impending failure in my career, and even old friends seemed puzzled and even a bit offended by the stressed out person I had become.

It was one of those times when everything seems



to go wrong, when an ugly, unyielding fate seems to be guiding us to destruction. I recall I didn't even like looking at myself in the mirror, and though often I wondered how others could stand my presence. Just about everything I encountered seemed to be conspiring to bring frustration and defeat to my doorstep. I was seriously out of tune with the rest of the world!

## Out of Tune

At such moments, one feels disconnected, disassociated and disoriented..., out of tune with the rhythm of life. The orderly symphony of the spheres is replaced by a jarring, discordant cacophony. Everything we embark upon goes awry or is more complicated than need be. We experience a sense separation from family, friends and associates..., and the worst is that we feel such low self-worth that we don't even feel like correcting the situation. I was the one out of tune with everyone else, and it was clear that everything, apart from me, was going about its business as normal. Somehow I had fallen out of orbit, and was floundering helplessly in a disorganised vacuum.

When we are a properly functioning whole, we can cope with almost any problem..., but when not, how does one survive the lonely, isolated hours of this alienation and futility? Pity poor Job as he cried out: *"Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea...; ...for the arrows of the Almighty are within me, their poison drowns my spirit...."* I wasn't quite the modern equivalent of Job, but it doesn't take much for

**If we have fallen off the path of serenity and orderly growth, we must get back on it again before we can function as vital, useful beings.**

us to feel an equal sense of helplessness and disorientation. Yet, the problems will eventually be resolved for better or for worse, with or without us. Sooner or later, either we or others will have the strength to sweep them away. When times have been hardest of all, I have often been comforted by words spoken out in my mind: *"this too shall pass away."*

Our son's illness broke through a barrier a few hours after he had entered a coma; he simply awoke, his face had new freshness about it, and he soon returned to vibrant good health. And all my problems and worries dissipated to nothing in but a few months, leaving room for new challenges. But regaining my balance after having lost my footing so badly, took nearly a year to accomplish. I had been sorely shaken by the rapid sequence of events that had pulled me down so hard and fast.

If we have fallen off the path of serenity and orderly growth, we must get back on it again before we can function as vital, useful beings. It is not so much the severity of our problems that unsettle us so much; it is the disjointed, dislocated state of being into which we have fallen. How can we at such times realign ourselves with life? Never give up, always have fortitude in the face of adversity, and never, ever give in to self pity.

Often it is enough simply to be patient, to believe that if we have not found the way, then the way will surely find us..., eventually. Having this confidence is enough for path and pilgrim to find each other again. One day, we will find ourselves at one again with the world. The friendly songs of birds and whisper of leaves will begin to hum in our ears and become a prologue to the gentle melody of contentment. The path we were on will appear once more beneath our feet and all be ours to enjoy again if we but stick it out without compromising our principles. And at that time, when the veil of disorder is lifted from our eyes, perhaps we will perceive that even these low points were necessary parts of life..., for we grew in ways that only those unhappy circumstances could have guaranteed.

Just as all things in the universe ebb and flow according to hidden rhythms, so too must our lives sometimes contract and turn inward before expanding again. It may be essential to endure extremes of despair in order to experience subsequent periods of growth and productivity. No life can follow the path of a straight, unbroken plateau. Nothing in the universe has such a flat, sterile form. Everything ebbs and flows, rises and falls, expands and contracts. There must be valleys in order to have hills. The dark valleys of life are a prelude to growth and understanding. Experience leads to knowledge and increased awareness even if the experiences are difficult at times to endure.

Our down periods are not punishments or ordeals that must be borne without reason. They are lessons in how to live a life of goodness, which in turn leads to spiritual growth and an expansion of consciousness and both mental and emotional maturity. If we are perceptive enough, if we observe carefully enough, we can't fail to hear the message. It is then up to us to utilise these teachings in the direction of wisdom and perception.

Job cried out in his pain, not merely for relief, but for guidance and understanding of the meaning of existence. We too can use our times of travail for creative meditation and progress in our individual search for meaning and direction. The universe is never disordered, and our own occasional periods of disorientation can be a vehicle for our greater comprehension of the wonder and beauty of life.





# Freedom, Give or Take

*by Benigna*

**F**REEDOM IS one of the most valuable qualities people can have in their lives, but too often they don't realise how important it is to them until they lose it, or give it away. A few people, although a worryingly substantial few, hurl it away by leading criminal lives and literally getting locked up in prison, where even choices like bedtimes, clothing and things to eat, which are present in even humble homes are no longer theirs to decide.

Frequently people give away their freedom by making poor choices about their spending, building up debt, perhaps slowly at first, but then alarmingly, until the credit bubble bursts and they find they are forced into unpleasant limitations about what they can and cannot do or have, where they can go and the kind of lifestyles they can lead. Yet others give away their freedom by entering into unwise relationships, which again take a downturn and leave them trapped in all manner of negative consequences.





*A stressful, unfulfilling job can take away your freedom.*

People give away freedom by taking jobs which give money but little satisfaction; by giving away their honesty so no-one trusts them; by speaking and judging harshly so they lose friendship and support; or perhaps by putting the needs of others far above their own, so their inner being suffers constant subjugation. Sometimes it seems people lose freedom by the seeming 'hand of fate' (good excuse that), suffering illnesses which take their mobility, energy or thinking faculties. They may even be hospitalised.

Other times, a person or group or people will take freedom from others either by force, as in times of war or strife, and in some circumstances even here in Britain, people may be born and raised without a taste of what freedom really is about. Some people have guilty secrets and lose their freedom to blackmail. And in other cases the taking of freedom occurs in less obviously brutal ways, like employers changing work conditions unfairly, demanding more effort for less return, or lenders raise interest rates on loans at the worst possible times in order to force foreclosure and a windfall return.

But the one freedom that is open to everyone with their faculties intact is however the freedom to think. In a quite remarkable 1959 book *"Man's Search for Meaning"*, psychiatrist and author Victor Frankl tells how he managed to stay alive in the death camps of the Nazi holocaust, quoting Friedrich Nietzsche as saying: *"He who has a why to live can bear with almost any how."* The preface to his book explains that moments of comfort do not establish a prisoner's will to live unless they help make sense out of suffering.

*"In the concentration camp every circumstance conspires to make the prisoner lose his hold,"* he says. *"All the familiar goals in life are snatched away. What alone remains is the last of human freedoms, the ability to choose one's attitude in a given set of circumstances."* This ultimate freedom, recognised by the ancient Stoics as well as by modern existentialists, takes on vivid significance in Frankl's story. The prisoners were only average men, but some at least, by choosing to be *"worthy of their suffering"* proved man's capacity to *"rise above his outward fate."*

People need meaning in their lives and they need freedom to spend their lives doing what gives them meaning, a sense of purpose bigger than themselves. So, with that introduction to freedom over, read now the following fairy tale that was fashioned after contemplation one evening on the profound value that freedom should have in the heart of every living person.

## Freedom Genie

A girl found a bottle on the beach, stoppered by a cork. In it a genie hammered on the glass, shouting: *"Let me out! I'll grant you three wishes if only you'll let me out!"* Without hesitation the girl tugged out the stopper, and the genie, now released, slithered free and stretched himself luxuriously.

*"Thank you so much,"* he said to the girl. *"I've been in there for 100 years. I was tricked inside before I could gather the magic around me after I refused to work the wishes of an evil tyrant. Being unable to breathe freely I was unable to regain my usual power but now I have my breath back again I can feel that my potency is quite restored. By the law of my kind I am now compelled to repay the debt by working your will three times. So please tell me, what is your first wish?"*

The girl was amazed and fascinated to meet a real genie face to face, and deeply compassionate about him having been robbed of his freedom for so long. She was touched by his explanation and his gratitude at being released. She was also heartily pleased at being able to make such a difference in his life. *"I have only one wish that I want you to enact,"* she said. *"I wish you to take your freedom and enjoy it."* The genie was astonished. *"You..., you don't want anything for yourself?"* he asked. *"It is my great pleasure and good fortune to set you free,"* said the girl with a broad smile, meaning it with all her heart. She had rarely felt so splendid inside. The genie smiled and disappeared in the conventional puff of smoke.

Being redundant and full of magical power, the genie had no need ever to work again. But it's in a genie's nature to grant wishes and so, even though he appeared to go away and was never seen again by the girl, he became her devoted full-time servant, gently smoothing her generous path through the world and materialising not only three times but every time he discerned her to have a wish. Many commented that the girl, who became a woman of great influence and integrity, appeared to live a charmed life, and so she did, without even knowing it.

The genie too lived a remarkable life, helping the girl become the best she could be, for by doing so he was working his own purpose and enjoying every moment of his freely made decision to serve the girl who became a woman, and by that means to play a part in the greater good.



# THE AKHENATEN "HERESY"

How Revolutionary  
Were the Reforms?

by *Ailsa de Motte*



**A**TEN WAS NOT a new god. He had been an aspect of Ra since the earliest times. In the *Hymn to the Aten*, Akhenaten says : “*Thou art Ra*”. Ra was not just a solar god, but the Great Creator, the spiritual cosmic force behind the sun, synonymous with Atum: as Atum-Ra he was acknowledged as the Supreme *Neter*, even though other

gods were worshiped in many places. Ra was the symbol of “God”, and had been seen as such since prehistoric times.

But Ra had been depicted in different aspects: as Khepri, the scarab, in the hour before dawn; as Aten, the sun disc, during the day; and as ww (Horus of the Two Horizons) at sunrise and sunset. Akhenaten removed these anthropomorphic and zoomorphic representations







*Imentet and Ra from the tomb of Nefertari.*

(Ra-Horakhty and Khepri) which had become associated with Ra, and chose one aspect only, the Aten solar-disc, ascribing to it all of Ra's attributes. His god, the Aten, was ONE, and of course it was obvious that the solar-disc was one alone without any counterpart or equal. By adding hands and arms to the solar-disc, which reached towards the earth, he had made this symbol more accessible and personal.

Yet Akhenaten's title for his god was still "*The Living One, Ra-Horakhty, Ruler of the Two Horizons, who rejoices in the Horizon in his name of Shu (Light) who has come in the Aten*" and, "*The words of Ra are before thee, my august father who taught me their essence*". Breasted makes a good point here: "*Under the name of Aten, Amenhotep IV introduced the worship of the Supreme God, but he made no attempt to conceal the identity of his new deity (that is, Aten) with the old sun god, Ra.*" Ra was still the source it appears..., only the name had changed. Why?

Ra was a national god. Egypt was an empire, not just a country; a new universal god was required to embrace and unify all peoples. The sun-disc, visible in all countries, was therefore a potent, universal symbol, which could be readily acceptable by all! To quote Breasted again: "*It can be no accident that the concept of a universal god arose in Egypt when he, the pharaoh, was receiving universal tribute from the known world of the day.*" So Akhenaten's 'reform' seemed to be really the culmination of

the move begun by his grandfather Thutmose IV, then continued and extended by his father, Amunhotep III, with both pharaohs' swing towards the Heliopolitan solar worship of Ra and the sun-disc.

One may sense the psychological tension that Akhenaten would have experienced when he named his first four children after Aten, (Merit-aten, Mekhit-aten, Ankhesenpa-aten, Neferneferu-aten), the last two children and his own assumed name (Nefer-neferu-ra, Setepen-ra and Nefer-kepheru-ra Wa-en-ra), as the enclitic. However, Akhenaten's concept of the Aten was not as the sole god, but the idea of universal monotheism had been expressed, although at this stage the other gods had not been excluded!

### Advances in Akhenaten's Reforms

What was still more revolutionary about Akhenaten's religious reforms was the total banning of the worship of Amun, the closing of that God's temples and the expulsion of the Amun priesthood. This was unprecedented. Never before had the worship of one of the gods been banned nor a temple closed. Even the name Amun was systematically chiselled out from temple walls, tombs and monuments, even to the defacement of this own father's name!

The enormous wealth and revenues of Amun's treasury were directed towards the worship of the Temple of the Aten. His early tolerance had ceased and religious persecution had begun. Later still, this edict was extended to the names of the other gods; away with Ptah, Osiris, Isis, Horus and all the other familiar traditional gods, although apparently their temples and cult centres were not all closed.

### The Third Phase

The third phase culminated in a total religious revolution..., the banishing of all other gods, with the Aten alone remaining as the only God, not just the Supreme God. This is the first occurrence of absolute monotheism, the total exclusion of all other gods.

Incongruously however, Akhenaten made three exceptions: Ma'at, goddess of truth and cosmic order, was not banned because he claimed he was 'Living in the Truth'; Thoth, god of knowledge and wisdom, was also tolerated; and thirdly the priests of Ra at Heliopolis continued their functions, for Atenism had after all evolved from this ancient solar cult.



*Akhenaten and his wife Nefertiti praying to the Aten who provided his rays to the Pharaoh and his queen.*



## The Assessments of Egyptologists over Time

It would be interesting to survey the assessments of Akhenaten over the last 100 years. Egyptologists, writing in the early 1900s, e.g. Arthur Weigall and the famed James Breasted, were full of praise and admiration for Akhenaten as a religious visionary and the world's first monotheist. Breasted calls him "the first prophet" and "the first individual in human history", but even he criticised Akhenaten's methods as being too harsh when he said "The persecution of Amun was especially severe".

One of the greatest authorities on Egyptian Religion, Wallis Budge, writing in the same period, was however less enthusiastic. He once again raised Akhenaten's ideals, calling him "...precocious and clever with a mind that worked quickly, possessing a determined will, very definite religious convictions and a fearless nature; earnest and sincere in his beliefs", but accuses him of "...spiritual arrogance and self-sufficiency, which made him oblivious to everything except his own feelings and emotions."

Yet another highly respected Egyptologist, Sir Alan Gardiner, admired Akhenaten's ideals and courage but deplored the methods he used to implement his religious reforms. Later scholars, with access to much more information, namely Cyril Aldred, Donald Redford and Nicholas Reeves, have also given mixed opinions about Akhenaten, some more condemnatory than others.

## The Debate on Akhenaten

Let us first look at some of these less than adulatory comments made about Akhenaten.

**1. The Negative Position:** Far from his monotheism being new, it looked more like an attempt to substitute one solar god for another. As Pharaoh, he was the only one in complete union with the supreme Deity, to the extent of limiting the access of all others to the Deity, except through himself as intermediary.

This is as it had been with all past pharaohs. But Akhenaten differed from them in that he wanted all other doctrines abolished. There was to be no mention of the age-old Egyptian myths and creation stories, no afterlife scenes at Akhetaten, no sacred animals, no cult statues, no anthropomorphic gods, not even personal amulets.



*Akhenaten, Nefertiti and their three daughters  
(ca. 1350 BCE) Neues Museum, Berlin.*

This demonstrates extreme religious intolerance. There was an absence of concern for the age-old problems of evil and suffering, for wrong it seems, no longer existed. There was no doctrine of opposites in nature and their reconciliation. There were no injunctions towards living a moral and virtuous life, and no petitions for spiritual enlightenment, understanding or wisdom. Atenism contained no eschatological hope of resurrection after death, and Osiris, the god of the underworld, was removed and nothing else put in its place.

This, above all else, must have caused great uncertainty and anxiety, and destroyed the hopes of ordinary people in any form of afterlife. In state policy Akhenaten has been accused of neglecting the national interest and of using religion to break the political dominance of the Theban priesthood. Finally, it has been alleged that the new religion introduced distortion and ugliness in art and sculpture, stressing instead, freedom, indolence and sensuality.

**2. Positive Aspects of Akhenaten's Theology:** Akhenaten attempted to drive home the point that the sun-disc was not just the abode of the god, but was the god itself "...who by means of the heat and light which emanates from his body gave life to everything". And, as stated by Budge in Akhenaten's cult "...defied the heat of the sun and worshipped it as the one eternal, creative, fructifying and life-sustaining force."





*The ruins of the Great Temple of Aten.*

The heat of Aten gave Akhenaten life, and maintained it in him. And while life was in him, Aten was in him. The life of Aten was his life and his life was Aten's life. Akhenaten therefore was the Aten, the living incarnation of the Aten, not a mere god or one of the gods of the Egyptian pantheon. It was therefore not necessary to go to the temple of Amun to receive spiritual nourishment, wisdom or understanding.

He placed great stress on life and loving relationships within his family and among the people. By elevating the status of Nefertiti to that of co-ruler, he recognised the feminine side of his godly status. For him, a balanced relationship was the way of Ma'at! Egyptologists acknowledge Nefertiti's status as co-ruler, and more depictions of Nefertiti have in fact been found than those of Akhenaten.

His new religion was democratic and universal, good for human relations within and outside his Kingdom. The Aten was for all the peoples. Far from being ugly, the new Amarna art-form brought the most beautiful and realistic depictions of the natural world ever seen in Egypt, and breaking with tradition, showed scenes of familial affection and freedom within the royal family for the first time.

On the problem of evil and the reconciliation of opposites, it can be argued that he was trying to make people focus not on the dualities of creation but on apprehending the reality of the One, namely heaven and earth as one reality. On the criticism of his 'hubris', one can argue that he was presenting the idea or fact of a mystic's experience; he saw himself as one with God, and there was no need for mediation through a priesthood, for his experience was direct.

## Final Analysis

Akhenaten has been judged by posterity as both pharaoh and religious reformer. This is perhaps the tragedy: the dichotomy between his duty as pharaoh to ensure the well-being of his country and people, and his desire to pursue his personal religious beliefs.

Viewed as a pharaoh, he was indeed a failure! He had inherited an Empire at peace with its neighbours, wealthier than ever before, and supremely confident. But by the end of this 17-year reign, the Empire was in severe decline, its vassal states had been conquered by intruders, or were in open revolt, and Egypt itself was teetering on the brink of social and economic collapse, its people confused and the country in turmoil. This explains much of the criticism directed by Egyptologists



towards Akhenaten, and it is fully justified if we judge him only on his lack of political acumen and neglect of the affairs of state.

But this is unduly harsh, as of course there is the other aspect of his life, and it is this which has been recognised by his admirers who see Akhenaten as a visionary and a mystic. However, his dream of one, universal God, and his bold and single-minded attempt to change the religious beliefs of the Egyptian people ultimately failed when he died.

Why did he fail? His views were too far in advance of his time, too sudden, too exclusive, and far too philosophical and abstract for a people devoted to their long-revered, traditional gods. His methods to extend his reforms were ultimately intolerant and harsh, and must have caused great distress, confusion and resentment. The Amun priesthood, although officially disbanded, were almost certainly working secretly against him, together with the army, disaffected by the troubles in the empire, which had been totally ignored by Akhenaten. His death meant a return to the old ways, to the familiar, loved gods and their traditional worship.

What was the motive behind his reforms? Was it a desire to curb the power of the hostile Amun priesthood as a continuation to the move made by Thutmosis IV and Amunhotep III? Or was he impelled by an experience of mystical revelation in accord with the desire to "Live in the Truth"? It was probably both, as ancient civilisations did not differentiate between the sacred and the secular. Although at first his reforms may appear to have been simply a continuation of elevating the Aten as a means of uniting the Egyptian empire, it cannot be doubted that there was a strong ideological motive and that his sincerity and belief in

**Egypt itself was teetering on the brink of social and economic collapse.**

his one god was the driving force throughout his life. Even his severest critics admit this.

Was he the first monotheist? An underlying monotheism had existed in ancient Egypt for well over fifteen hundred years, since the Old Kingdom and even before. Passages in the *Egyptian Book of the Dead* suggest that the Egyptian priests and the learned elite were monotheists. But Akhenaten was the first person to openly express that the great, creative cosmic power is one and universal, bringing light, warmth and sustenance to all living things. Breasted extols him in these words:

*"Akhenaten saw in him [the Aten] the beneficent father of all mankind. It was the first time in history that*



*Stela of the Great temple of Aten at Akhetaten.*

*a discerning eye had caught the great universal truth."*

This concept of god was not expressed again until fifteen hundred years later with the coming of the great master, Jesus of Nazareth. Akhenaten therefore stands as a complex, but remarkable and memorable figure in the spiritual evolution of humankind in its search for Truth.

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# HEALING

## Allow the Cosmic to 'In-Form' You

by *Adelle Maybank*



**T**HE NEO-PLATONIST philosopher Plotinus (3<sup>rd</sup> Century CE) said in regard to faith: “*Unless you believe, you will not understand.*” This seems like a vicious cycle until we realise that there is inherent in every person a pre-existing revelation from the Cosmic, something which came with us into life at birth. This ‘light’ from within becomes the very first step in the mystical process

and is revealed to all seekers through thought and contemplation.

Self-healing is necessarily a healing of the ‘self’. But it is the product of a collective human consciousness which loves itself with great intensity and sincerity. The healing phenomenon in the individual is the result of a transcending compassion purposefully extended from many to one through the psychic matrix of a shared



humanity. Every human act performed with charity, especially deeply selfless acts, become mystically amplified by the Cosmic to the psychic, mental, emotional and physical benefits of those in need. Of course, there must be a subjective acceptance or openness to the healing process, and those who are healed in turn incur an obligation of becoming healers themselves as best they can, and transmitters of the vital force of life itself.

What do we mean by healing oneself, as opposed to healing another person or animal? Healing oneself means that an injured part of one's body is spontaneously repaired in ways we don't understand, but of course take fully for granted. The usual sort of healing we know of, the sort that the body does automatically in the background all the time, is not what is meant by healing oneself or engaging in self-healing. 'Normal' healing is the body just getting on with the business of doing what it does best, namely healing itself. A cut on the skin is repaired by the body without fanfare; "just leave it to nature" as one so often hears. And certain animals like salamanders for example do a lot more than just heal scratches; they can grow entire limbs as easily as our scratches are automatically healed.

Scientists are of course assiduously seeking an answer to how such feats of nature can be accomplished, how stem cells can somehow be coaxed into being produced at precisely the places where they are needed to cause the

**But it is the product of a collective human consciousness which loves itself with great intensity and sincerity.**

limb to re-grow. No doubt it is an ability which will come to humans too one day through the marvels of medical science. But is there not perhaps some sort of cosmically induced multidimensional life-force permeating all nature and directing how each individual creature should physically be constructed? In other words, quite apart from the DNA and gene expressions in living creatures doing all they can to keep the body sound and healthy, is there not perhaps some force field which ultimately sets the parameters as to what can be healed and how fast and to what perfection this can be accomplished? Or is it all merely encoded in our DNA and genes, and therefore an entirely physical phenomenon? I would suggest a bit of both.

As the complexity and sophistication of an organism rises, more and more things can go wrong. With the emergence of our species, homo sapiens, some hundred to two hundred thousand years ago, complexity, and in particular, neural complexity, has become the key feature



*Certain animals like salamanders for example, do a lot more than just heal scratches; they can grow entire limbs as easily as our scratches are automatically healed.*

distinguishing us from all other creatures, even our closest ape relatives. Complexity is crucial to the formation of consciousness, and especially important in the emergence of our awareness of our own thought processes, an ability no other creature is believed to possess.

The dual nature of our being is equipped to repair itself from a set of blueprint of sorts, like a stamp or die from which all humans are made. Some would say this is the DNA, and this is undoubtedly a major part of the story. But for some investigators, there seems as well to be something less tangible at work, something which may well be termed the 'in-forming' of the DNA and genes that do the grunge work of actually accomplishing the healing.

It is postulated that there exists a 'non-physical' force field which is ultimately the reason that the body regenerates itself the way it does. In other words it is a field which causes the body to heal itself, like the growth of a new limb, in only one way, a way that is defined by the unique field applicable for that particular person, and of course the unique DNA structure and genes that accompany the individual throughout life. Although the bulk of this 'in-forming' process took place before birth, some of it still occurs throughout life, and most of us have yet to learn that we already possess the power to attract ever more perfect ways of Cosmically 'in-forming' our lives when we seek a healing that can come about through no other means. We



have within us unique healing powers that far exceed what medical science currently understands, and it is 'merely' a matter of learning how to unlock that immense potential.

## To Be Human

The word *human* comes originally from an Indo-European root meaning *earth*, and latinised into the word *humus*. The ancient Vedic expression "*as above, so below*" found its way both into Hermeticism and the Kabala, and is expressed in only slightly altered form in the words of Jesus in the Lord's Prayer: "*...on earth as in Heaven*". This leads us to a greater understanding of the microcosm in which we live and how it relates to the macrocosm of which we know so little, but which, we are told, is like the microcosm, and can be drawn upon for wisdom and assistance as easily as from our resources in the microcosm of Earth. The infinite unites with the finite, thereby producing humankind. And from the infinite the Cosmic Mind 'in-forms' all creatures able to perceive it's 'voice', how to heal themselves.

What is the future of spiritual or psychic healing for us? Taking humankind as a whole, healing is the sum total of all human efforts directed at accomplishing good health. Our modern technical marvels need to be

**And from the infinite the Cosmic Mind 'in-forms' all creatures able to perceive it's 'voice', how to heal themselves.**

harmoniously married with an enlightened and highly refined system of self-control in order to accomplish true healing. Above all, when helping not only ourselves, but especially others, we need to use our inherent ability love with great intensity, for it is precisely this impersonal love and caring which allows the Cosmic 'in-forming' process to begin.

Diseases can be controlled and sometimes entirely eliminated through this Cosmic stamp of the perfect human being 'in-forming' us how to go about healing ourselves. Of course aging must be accepted as a natural process of maturation which prepares us for the next phase of development. And the usual illnesses of old age are part and parcel of the Cosmic stamp from which we came about. In other words, the Cosmic 'in-forming' process takes this into account, and no amount of wishing or praying will avoid death in the end. Death is often viewed by mystics merely as a transition from one state of being to another; and even in that other state, is it not reasonable to assume that the 'in-forming' process will continue?

On the individual level, we can draw from the



*We can bring our lives to the brink of ruin through wrong thoughts and ways of living.*

collective energies and experiences of humankind by thinking of ourselves as being merged with others, and them being merged with us. With finely focussed attunement, this synthesis can produce near miraculous healing results, or reintegration in ourselves of the vital principle of our humanness, namely the stamp or mould or field from which we all came about.

## Transmutation of Self

As humans, we all share an often unrealised mission, the transmutation of ourselves and of our planet into something a great deal more than a mere collection of individual living 'parts'. The first step in accomplishing this must be the sublimation of self in preparation for the 'in-forming' process. Each act of transformation, each invitation to the Cosmic to 'in-form' us fully in the correct way of living, must be done in a spirit of abandonment to one's ultimate destiny, and it must above all be done in a profoundly selfless manner.

Among the powers that we derive from the sacred nature of our humanness is the power of precognition and the formation of new realities which alter the paths we were 'destined' to follow. We have ingrained within us the ability to see our future potentials and pitfalls, and to fulfil our own 'prophecies' by actively making them happen through creative visualisation, followed by the bringing into manifestation of the realities we seek. But just as we can visualise and bring about highly positive and beneficial results, we can also bring our lives to the brink of ruin through wrong thoughts and ways of living.

When our visualisations, whether intentional or not, involve negative aspects such as hatred, malice, illness or feelings of inadequacy, our lives attract those conditions to it. In other words, we in effect shut out the Cosmic 'in-forming' process dead in its tracks, and the consequences can be severe indeed. But when we approach our lives in a





*With love and compassion for all people and creatures, we enter states of harmony.*

positive way, deliberately attuning ourselves to feelings of transpersonal identity, deliberately infusing ourselves with love and compassion for all people and creatures, we enter states of harmony with all those people and creatures, and are freed from the ravages of envy, hatred and greed. Our creative powers become fully 'in-formed' by the Cosmic, and our lives are 'stamped' by the perfect mould of our species. In other words, we manifest health, happiness and success in abundance, and satisfy our deepest longings.

Many people permanently look forward to something better about to happen, not now, but some time in the *future*. Something is always about to happen, but it never actually arrives. Nirvana for example is so often erroneously considered as a future state, when it is in its very nature a state of the present. And of course there are the many sorts of awaited apocalyptical events that have existed over the centuries; and particularly relevant for us, is the recent end-of-the-world scenario that many believed would unfold rapidly at the end of the Maya calendar in 2012. Such things involve a future state, not the present, and they are usually founded on absurd suppositions.

With spiritual healing, the space-time continuum is transcended, and the being enters a timeless, spaceless state where the Cosmic 'in-forming' process is allowed to do its work in the 'Eternal Now'. Bathed in the creative forces of the past, present and future available to the particular person, uncountable generations of living beings just like us unite with us in an intense bond of love, thereby transforming the very substance of our physical bodies and bringing about the self-healing we seek.

But to be frank, self-healing of this sort is rare, for so few of us possess the level of abandon to the Cosmic Will that it requires. The amputee, unlike the salamander, does not grow a new finger; not because it is impossible, but because of the great devotion and abandon it requires to accomplish such a feat. Miraculous remissions from terminal cancer have occurred without doubt, and they

are medically documented, but they are rare, and for the same reason as just given.

Where then, does spiritual healing fit into our limited time frame if our ability to transcend ourselves is so imperfect? Well, if we can't move mountains or transform matter, we can at least move our wills and command ourselves to love others several orders of magnitude more than before. If we don't know what love is, and have not yet experienced the impersonal love of the Divine, we can at the very least begin by treating each individual we wish to assist by mentally, and through the use of visualisation, entering their body and mind and feeling how they feel, suffering for a while what they suffer, experiencing their weaknesses, and transferring to them, mentally, emotionally and with deep compassion, whatever strengths we have that could assist them to accomplish their own self-healing.

For a brief moment we can transcend our being, and become briefly no longer merely our old 'self', but intensely the 'Self' of our deepest and most spiritual nature. This is how we discover that we are not only the individual who formerly lacked health, but the individual who has unexpectedly accomplished a miraculous episode of healing by allowing the Cosmic to 'in-form' the body to heal itself. And greatest of all, we will have seen by then a glimmer of the greatest love there is in the universe, the love of the Cosmic itself for its Creation.

I am a surgeon in normal life, but I know I can only perform through my discipline technical and artistic feats of healing. I take tissue apart and lay it back together. Some power beyond me however accomplishes the healing itself. As a doctor I am keenly aware of the material processes involved; but I am also aware of some other power working through me as I try as compassionately as I can to do the best for my patients. I know this power,

**I take tissue apart and lay it back together. Some power beyond me however accomplishes the healing itself.**

whatever we may call it, tries incessantly to work through all people; and it becomes most effective when we care and love the people and animals within our karmic radius with great intensity and sensitivity to their needs. This is how we really heal.

Every person is Cosmically empowered to act as a physician in transmitting the healing power of Cosmic love, thereby allowing the 'in-forming' power of the Cosmic to guide and direct those who seek to be healed. Don't forget then: nothing is accomplished without Love.







# Healing the Whole Person

by George F Buletza

**T**HERE IS A TENDENCY in the world with its standards of good and bad, right and wrong, for many people to think that they know the only way to health and well-being. Attitudes that permit us to say, *"I'm right and you're wrong"* have been with us a long time, and are pretty hard to lose.

Wise physicians as far back as ancient Greece and even earlier to ancient Egypt, noted that such attitudes could affect the way we perceive our world, our relationships, our hopes for the future, and ultimately our

health and well-being. This attitude formed the basis for one of the three stages of human growth and evolution portrayed in the mysteries of Isis of ancient Egypt, later on in the classical period of Greece, and much later on in the alchemical traditions of medieval Europe.

## The Three Stages of Human Growth

During the course of the year, statues of Isis were draped with robes of certain colours that were used to represent the three stages of personal growth. To ancient priests and



physicians, the first stage was the colour red and denoted vitality, energy, new life and childlike innocence. This was a dream-like phase, partially unconscious and accepting of nature, but fully participating in her bounties and blessings. It is a stage where we are new to everything, where we need protection from many things due to our inexperience, and naively expect life to take care of us without giving anything in return.

The second stage of personal growth was characterised in the mysteries by the colour pair black and white. These colours represented duality, good and bad, right and wrong, likes and dislikes. In broad terms it was a phase of choice being presented and taken. Such judgmental thinking leads to expectations about how the world ought to be, how we or others need to behave. From a plethora of alternatives characterised by the

colours black and white, choices are made. There is a need to focus clearly on the realities resulting from these choices. The realities sought are of course the bountiful gifts that life creates for us if given half a chance.

The third stage represented by Gold, is the stage of wisdom, reintegration and wholeness. In the Gold stage of human growth an overwhelming compassion drives everything that we do. The Rosicrucian studies point out, that our growth and transformation does not occur by being hermits or avoiding integration with other human beings. Transmutation occurs through the tests and trials of life, through our interaction with others. The alchemist's work is with personal realities, with what he or she believes to be true about the world. This subtle shift in outlook, in attitude, in consciousness, suggests that rather than our shaping life to meet our expectations, we can choose to be transformed by life, and by the relationships and experiences we attract to us.

## Developing Healing Relationships

In the ancient world, emphasis was given to the phases and cycles of life as normal processes of nature. These followed each other in ordered sequence and each contributed to the unfoldment of future phases. With regard to healing, this rule also applies.

In terms of a healing situation, the first phase represented by the colour red, the healer-patient relationship is like a parent-child relationship. In the black-and-white phase for instance, patients may begin to take personal responsibility rather than expecting a parent-figure to solve their problems. Patients begin participating in the healing process by following the advice of a qualified



*Statues of Isis were draped with robes of certain colours.*

healer, watching diet, exercise, breathing and thinking, as well as actively visualising and sincerely wishing for a positive outcome. By participating in their own healing processes, patients come to realise the awesome healing potential already within themselves.

Speaking in the present now, patients in the black/white phase start taking charge of the outcome of their health or eventual demise, and assume far greater responsibility than before. But this has the tendency of cutting out opportunities for developing healing relationships that bring them out of themselves and the many old, narrow and patently false solutions that may have been adopted in ignorance. Such people run the risk of missing opportunities to integrate with other people who may evoke new ways of doing things and a broader view of the world of healing. If their visualisations,

meditations, exercises and other self-healing techniques do not appear to work, they deem themselves unworthy failures. As former Emperor of the Rosicrucian Order, Dr H Spencer Lewis called it, is a form of 'mental poisoning', not one of self-healing.

For the healer, the black/white phase, filled with opportunity that it undoubtedly is, can also lead to unhappiness and the so-called 'dark night of the soul'. Regardless of healing style, whether medical or metaphysical, healers have a personal need to fulfil their reality, to confirm with confidence their belief in their healing abilities. When unsuccessful, they may become despondent and conclude they are poor healers, not cut out for the profession. Or they may try and bolster their belief and confidence in their abilities through one or more of the following strategies, saying to themselves:

1. *"I will master this problem, if I just try harder, read another book, attend another lecture, take another course. Next time it will turn out all right."*
2. We may decide it's the patient's fault. *"My therapy is fine; if only they followed my instructions, everything would be okay."*
3. *"This is not the kind of illness or patient we need to deal with in the future. This is not our specialty or area of expertise."*
4. We can comfort the patient and ourselves by deciding that the very best is being done and that progress is being made, even if we can't see it yet.



Whether healer or patient, we tend to think that strategies like these help us compete in a black-and-white world. They inflate the outer personality, the ego, and encourage us to believe that we are in control of our lives and problems. Yet even if we are convinced of our control, if we still have the courage to go inward with an open, questioning mind, we may discover that we still secretly fear we are not really in control, that maybe we are not really 'good' healers. We get by, but only just. We make mistakes, and feel the guilt of failure.

Caught in the extremes of dualistic thinking, neither healer nor patient is immune from fear, superstition and ignorance; burnout, despair and degenerating health are all the legacy of dualistic thinking. The black-and-white stage represented death in the ancient mysteries; and death in turn represented putrefaction and separation in alchemy. Almost every culture uses black or white, or a combination of both, to represent death. Yet the colours of death also symbolise the potential for rebirth and transformation to the third stage of life, represented by gold.

### The Stage of Wisdom, Reintegration

Gold is the stage of wisdom, reintegration, and wholeness. The idea of a separate healer and patient loses meaning in the gold phase. When, as healers, we deal with patients, we gain insights into our own lives. Friends' needs are our needs, friends' tears our tears, friends' healing our healing. In this gold stage there is no separation between patient and healer, and an overwhelming compassion drives all

**In the gold stage, entering into a healing relationship is an adventure.**

that one does.

We are one humanity with common needs and problems, and even common transformations. Healings and transformations occur through relationships. We may decide to practice the art of healing consciously, but this is done without the compulsion to act out the role of healer or patient. Each time we enter into a healing relationship with others we do not know what the precise outcome will be. We do not know in just what way our persona can be beneficially transformed. In the gold stage, entering into a healing relationship is an adventure. It is a quest that leads to ever-greater self-discovery, deeper appreciation for the love that unites all.

When a person is ill, that person is vulnerable. Illness cracks our habitual defence mechanisms. When our unquestioned realities and beliefs are no longer effective, we can decide to replace them with realities that more



*Gold represented is the third stage of wisdom, reintegration and wholeness.*

accurately mirror our inner intentions. Upon discarding irrelevant defences we may also be surprised to discover that we can experience greater freedom, spontaneity, and creativity.

If we are willing to let our defences down, to look deeply within at our own nature, then we can come to realise the commonality, the unity, and the love that always existed but that we didn't notice before. We may be surprised by our own transformations made as a result of seeing what is true in this mirror of self. We may discover at an inner psychic level there are no coincidences, that we and those attracted to us are co-healers, co-creators, on an extraordinary adventure we call life.

To embark on this extraordinary adventure, a trust in the inner power of healing and transformation is essential. Creative openness, integrity, firmness, and compassion follow from genuine confidence or intense trust. With genuine confidence we find that no one in a relationship is less than, or more than, he or she actually is. Instead of being lost in sympathetic responses to symptoms, we interact with compassion and integrity, creatively transforming into what we actually are.

With trust, illness can be an opportunity, a threshold to greater health; to the golden state of life we call wisdom. With experience we come to realise that genuine confidence comes only when we are willing to face our own fears. Crossing this threshold results in greater physical, emotional, and mental wholeness. Rather than being the dualistic opposite of illness, health can become a celebration and appreciation of life. Life is our friend. Life is the provider of the conditions and opportunities that evoke the evolution of the open mind.

Growth, transformation and evolution can apply and be incorporated into any therapeutic modality, whether traditional or non-traditional. We can choose to follow allopathic medicine, homeopathy, chiropractic, acupuncture, touch, nutrition, or any of a host of other approaches to healing, and still realise that life is a shared adventure wherein we all are evolving.



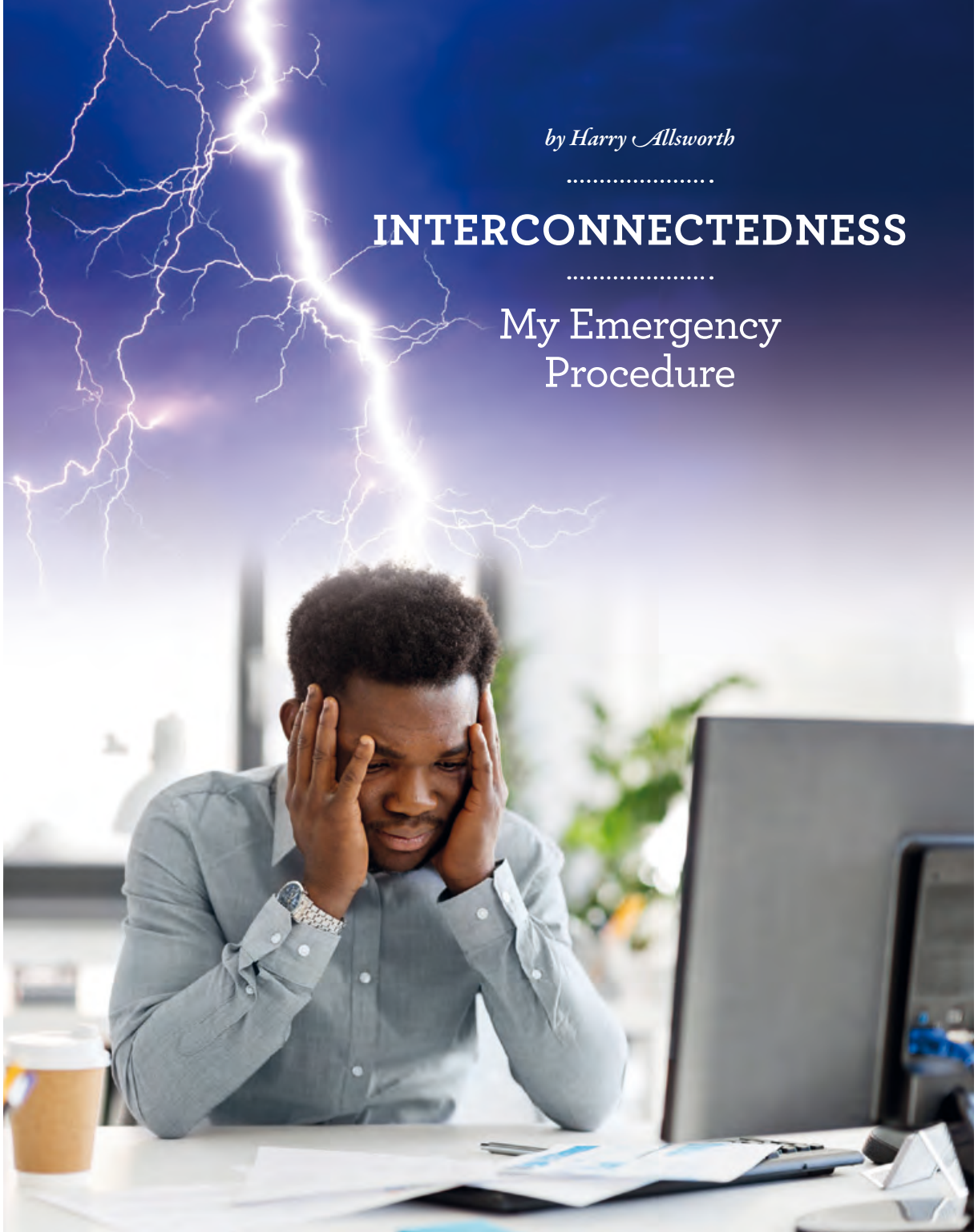
by *Harry Allsworth*

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# INTERCONNECTEDNESS

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## My Emergency Procedure



**H**AVE YOU ever had one of those days where nothing seems to be going right, where deadlines mysteriously converge, traffic lights are always red and lift doors close as you approach them? I'm sure you have and you'll understand how I felt as I found myself sitting alone in my cubicle late one summer afternoon in the large open-plan office where I earn my daily bread. Long after everyone had

gone home I sat there feeling decidedly sorry for myself and more than a bit angry that I hadn't completed the things I should easily have done that day.

In my negative self-reflection I felt that every effort I made to move things forward was being frustrated by delays and unnecessary obstructions. My mind rushed from one memory of disappointment to another in what seemed an endless cycle of unforeseen problems,



unhelpful people and coincidences that seemed to have made a mockery of my plans. “*Why me!*” was the sorry-for-myself cry.

Most people have such moments from time to time, sometimes during the day, but also late at night when the mind can't settle and keeps us awake with self-tormenting reflections about every trivial thing in God's creation. And when we're deep in such gloom it's easy to become caught in a whirlpool of negativity that can overwhelm our normal critical abilities and make us unable to break the cycle of negative thoughts, self-criticism and self-doubt.

If you recognise some of this, take heart, you're not alone, for many well-known people have through the ages been known to have been plagued at times with self-doubt and negative thoughts: William Blake, Buzz Aldrin, Hans Christian Andersen, Winston Churchill, Charles Darwin, Abraham Lincoln, Michelangelo, Isaac Newton, and many more. However, they all achieved great things in spite of, or maybe even because of, such negative moments; and that should give us hope when we face similar circumstances. If others fall face in the mud and manage to pull themselves up and continue as though nothing untoward has happened, then we can too. But how do we accomplish this? How should we react when we find ourselves falling into that negative state of mind that brings on all the 'demons of the mind'? Is there an emergency procedure we can follow when we're at our lowest ebb? Happily there is!

### Pull Yourself Together

When we're down and at our whiniest about our circumstances, some well-intentioned people will gruffly say “*pull yourself together!*” as though a few kind words wouldn't have been better under the circumstances. Such advice so often ignores the basic mechanisms of our brains that have evolved over millions of years to recognise patterns in the world around us. So when, through our own careless thinking, our minds have been given the task of finding every negative thing in sight, it



*Many great men suffered from self-doubt, but still managed to achieve great things.*

does an extraordinarily good job of it. It can even create negative outcomes that don't even exist yet! So how can we free ourselves from this state of mind? Especially, how do we stop having negative thoughts when we know perfectly well they will merely spawn more of the same?

I find the most critical step in escaping such a mental state is one of self-recognition, namely recognising and becoming aware that my mind is

**I try to enter a state of neutrality, so-to-speak put the mind in neutral and allow life to coast along a while 'without me.'**

actually actively seeking negativity around me, when it could just as easily be actively seeking positive situations instead. Then, rather than encouraging the mind to continue its self-defeating task of finding more and more negativity, I try to enter a state of neutrality, so-to-speak put the mind in neutral and allow life to coast along a while 'without me.' As I do this, I naturally gravitate to a state of less and less thinking, less and less judgement being delivered by my chattering brain about the rights and wrongs of whatever bothers me so much. Eventually, I try to enter a state of no-thought, where my mind enters the closest I can to a state of true nothingness. I try metaphorically to 'step off the world' a while as I blank my mind and give up everything to a 'higher power.' That's the start of my emergency procedure; that's how I begin when I wish to stop the destructive cycle.

It's like a resetting of the mind; you know pressing and holding one of those buttons on your electronic watch until it's ready to have the time reset. The inner silence that accompanies a blanking of the mind is precisely what we need in order to re-sensitise ourselves to the presence of our deeper self, and through that awakening, start looking in a different, more positive direction. Of course thinking of nothing is on the surface quite a difficult task as it entails not thinking at all. How do you do that? Well, even if you can't fully accomplish it, the mere act of trying will at least partially assist in resetting your mind and making it 'available' to think about better things.

### Illumination

Nevertheless, returning to my cubicle in the office, sitting there dejectedly that clear summer's evening, I started trying to think of nothing just as the fading sunlight started to reflect from a window in a tall office building



behind me and illuminated parts of the large open plan room in a seemingly random manner. It was a surreal experience, as though time were slowing down just for me. It truly felt as though something were happening just for my benefit, and I was astounded at the sudden clarity and beauty of everything.

As I looked more closely at the light and dark patches in the large room, the areas being exposed by the light were anything but random for me; there was purpose and beauty everywhere. The photographs of families on the desks of my work colleagues were brightly illuminated showing the smiles and love within each scene. I began to follow the light beams as they slowly moved around the room and noticed how each item touched by the sun's rays seemed to be linked in some way with the previous item, and leading on to the next one as if they were related to each other, one giving birth to the next, each one connected to its predecessor and its successor in a long line of cause and effect.

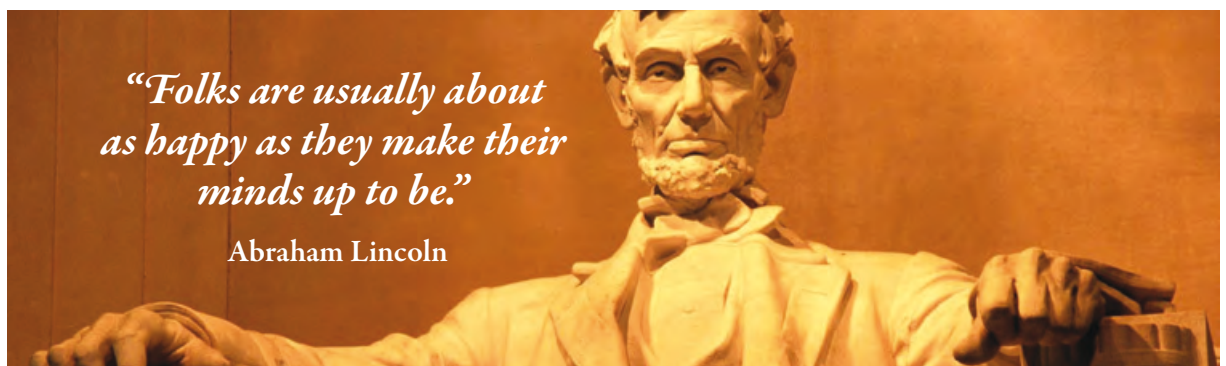
Following the light in this silent manner, I could see how people in this office shared many things. More than just trivial tasks, they shared aspirations and above all the many small islands of love they had. I forgot time, forgot where I was as I began to feel linked by deeper shared values that made all of us more like a big loving family than a random group of people sharing a miserable and stressful work environment.

As I wondered what would be illuminated next I suddenly felt a warmth on my back and knew that I was now the focus of the light. At that moment I realised that instead of being held back, I was simply a part of a much larger pattern where, even if I didn't appreciate it at the time, I was an essential cog in a big and wondrous machine, a much greater whole than I had ever dared believe possible. And the best thing about this was that I felt a deep purpose behind that 'whole', even though I couldn't understand what it was. All seemed so clear at the time, though I can't today explain what it was other than the profound sense of connectedness that so utterly consumed me.



That annoying red traffic light that delayed me from getting to work on time that morning, the old man driving erratically and at a snail's pace which made my two-minute delay to my desk turn into 10 minutes, all that and much more had a purpose, and I saw that the purpose was good and in fact was precisely as it should be; no faster, no slower, no need to change anything one way or the other, all was working to perfection just the way it was meant to happen. The only thing that was missing that hectic morning was my trust in allowing a greater plan to unfold. Truly there is a greater purpose behind everything, even when we can't see it, but maybe *especially* when we can't see it.

So the next time you're confronted by a 'bad day', take time to relax a while, step off the world and blank your mind with a feeling of gratitude and wonder for just a few minutes. There's a whole universe out there working for you, making things happen just the way they were meant to. Our thoughts and experiences are all interconnected and we can and should design our lives to seek the positive and creative, and shun and discard the negative and destructive..., always!



# A Life Transformed

## A Loving Reminder from Mum

by Susan Ayles



**A**T AGE twenty-four I was one day abruptly abandoned by my thirty-two year old husband who had found a pretty sixteen year old girl and moved abroad with her, no doubt to start a new life on a sunny beach, out of reach of the law and the burden of a family. Our only child, a girl, was a precocious three and a half year old bundle of energy and light and I can't to this day understand how anyone could have walked away from such a perfect gift of life.

Having been engaged full-time in raising her, I had little work experience, few friends other than immediate family to call upon. But now I faced the immediate need of finding the funds to pay the monthly bills and keep myself and my child together. The prospects of my being able to survive on my own were not good. My husband had worked as a house renovator, usually taking his income in cash in order to avoid income tax. We (or rather he) had a nest-egg of around £7,000 in cash in a safety deposit box



in the flat around the time he left, but all this he withdrew and left me with £500 and the great worry of needing to learn quickly how to survive on my own.

It was only through the support and assistance of my father and brother that I was not turned out onto the street. And in the end it was predominantly the kindness of an aging philanthropist that made it possible for me to return to full-time employment and a part-time education that eventually led me to a Masters Degree and a successful career in psychiatry, an area of study I had at age 22 never even heard of.

While my father and brother, neither of whom could afford much, did all they could to assist me and my girl with our most important material needs (they were truly wonderful in this respect), the sudden emptiness of no longer having a partner to love and a father for my child, completely devastated me inside. During those first few months I went through the deepest, most agonising depression I could ever imagine a human could endure. Daily I had to grit my teeth and struggle to keep my spirits up, even if for no other reason than to keep my daughter from being affected by what had happened. Nothing was more important to me than providing the best I could for her.

As many a wealthy individual can attest, having one's

**Through tear-filled eyes I could see the room still half flooded with the rays of a welcoming early morning sun.**

material needs well cared for does not guarantee a state of happiness. And having my immediate material needs taken care of by my loving father and brother, did not satisfy the great inner emptiness I felt all the time. One summer's morning, very early, after a night of agonising inner turmoil, I came to the realisation that if I was to survive at all, I would have to find something beyond the material world to pull me through. I was deeply distraught, and without knowing quite what I was doing I sat down in abject humility and asked in a soft whisper for help.

Although my father was a gentle, loving man, he had never displayed anything more than utter contempt for anything that smacked of religion. And my brother was neither against spiritual inclinations nor for them, they were surplus to his needs. So, having spent my entire adult life in their company, spiritual matters had not been particularly important for me either. I had no idea therefore that there was a possible avenue out of my dilemma that morning when I whispered my plea for help. It was a heartfelt, spoken prayer, even though I had no idea who or what I was appealing to. In desperation I simply asked and I could never have been prepared for what happened next.

Having uttered the plea, the room suddenly went quiet in a way utterly out of this world, as though I had unleashed something awesome and beyond my ability to control, like a sorcerer's apprentice using the wizard's wand without permission to unleash the biblical ten plagues and not knowing how to stop them. I was taken aback, literally aghast at the sudden change of tone and vibrations in the room. Through tear-filled eyes I could see the room still half flooded with the rays of a welcoming early morning sun. They beautifully illuminated the room in warm, comforting rays as a fathomless, indescribable emotion of sorrow swept over me. Great tears welled up and I howled with grief about something I could not even begin to comprehend.

I could easily have dismissed this up till that moment as being an emotional reaction to the raw deal I thought life had dealt me. Certainly with my present profession as a psychiatrist that is still the most rational explanation medical science would arrive at. But then something incredible happened. Over a period of a minute or two at most, the sunlight streaming into the room changed its appearance completely, and the entire room became brightly illuminated in the most calm, comforting 'silent' light I have ever experienced. It was as if in an instant I had been transported out of this world to parallel room in a parallel world, looking exactly the same but *feeling* utterly different in every way I could think of. It was something completely otherworldly and more serene and restful than I had ever experienced.

Before me, and looking straight at me in broad daylight and with unfathomable kindness, I saw my mother who had passed away when I was eight years old. Her death had occurred after a brief illness and left me devastated and lonely throughout my teens, until I fell in love one day with my future though only temporary husband. The brief happiness I had enjoyed with him, and especially in the comfort and security of being able to raise my daughter unhindered by the pressures of having to feed the family, had been wonderful. Although that was all gone now, I had before me a link to a happy past I had completely forgotten, a past in which I remembered how my mother had put me to bed as a child always with a small prayer she made me solemnly recite with her. It was a small formality which brought me childhood stability, comfort and the knowledge that my mother loved me more than anything on earth; as much, I realised, as I loved my own little girl. All this I had forgotten up until that moment.

Her image did not remain long, but long enough for me to know that something extraordinary was happening to me. Something unfathomable passed between us in mere moments, and with tears of gratitude and regret at





having all but forgotten her deep love for me, I broke down sobbing again, thanking her over and over for all she had done for me. It took me half an hour to calm myself down, the tears went and I sat for a very long time in complete silence, calmly looking with wonderment at even the most trivial things in the room. During those precious few hours, I saw what I can only describe as the very substance of life in all things. It was the calmest, most serene time of my life, and the overwhelming feeling was one of security and the certainty that all would be right again one day, and despite my present difficulties, things were in fact on track precisely as they should, exactly down to the last atom as they were meant to unfold.

And then I remembered fully the words of the simple prayer I had recited with my mother all those years ago each evening, and which in an extraordinary way had brought me such warmth and comfort:-

*Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.  
And if I should die before I wake  
I pray the Lord my soul to take.*

This prayer, originally printed in *The New England Primer* in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century, must have been repeated by millions upon millions of children in English-speaking parts of the world over the centuries. Although the words are probably a bit too childish and simplistic for most adults to bother with nowadays, they had deep meaning for my mother, and no doubt especially so when she saw how much they comforted and enveloped me with her love. That morning, they had an especially deep meaning for me too, and from then on my life completely changed

**It was as if a hand had lifted me up and showed me what beauty and happiness still awaited me if I would but let life unfold as it was meant to.**

utterly, as though a whole new chapter of optimism and hope had begun. My mood and inner vision changed radically. It was as if a hand had lifted me up and showed me what beauty and happiness still awaited me if I would but let life unfold as it was meant to. I was filled with gratitude and joy, and resolved to lead a life of kindness and charity to all people to the greatest extent I could, and to leave my unhappy past behind me for good. “*Who am I*”, I said to myself, “*to be anything but grateful for all I have been given?*”

Within a week, and with very little effort, I had

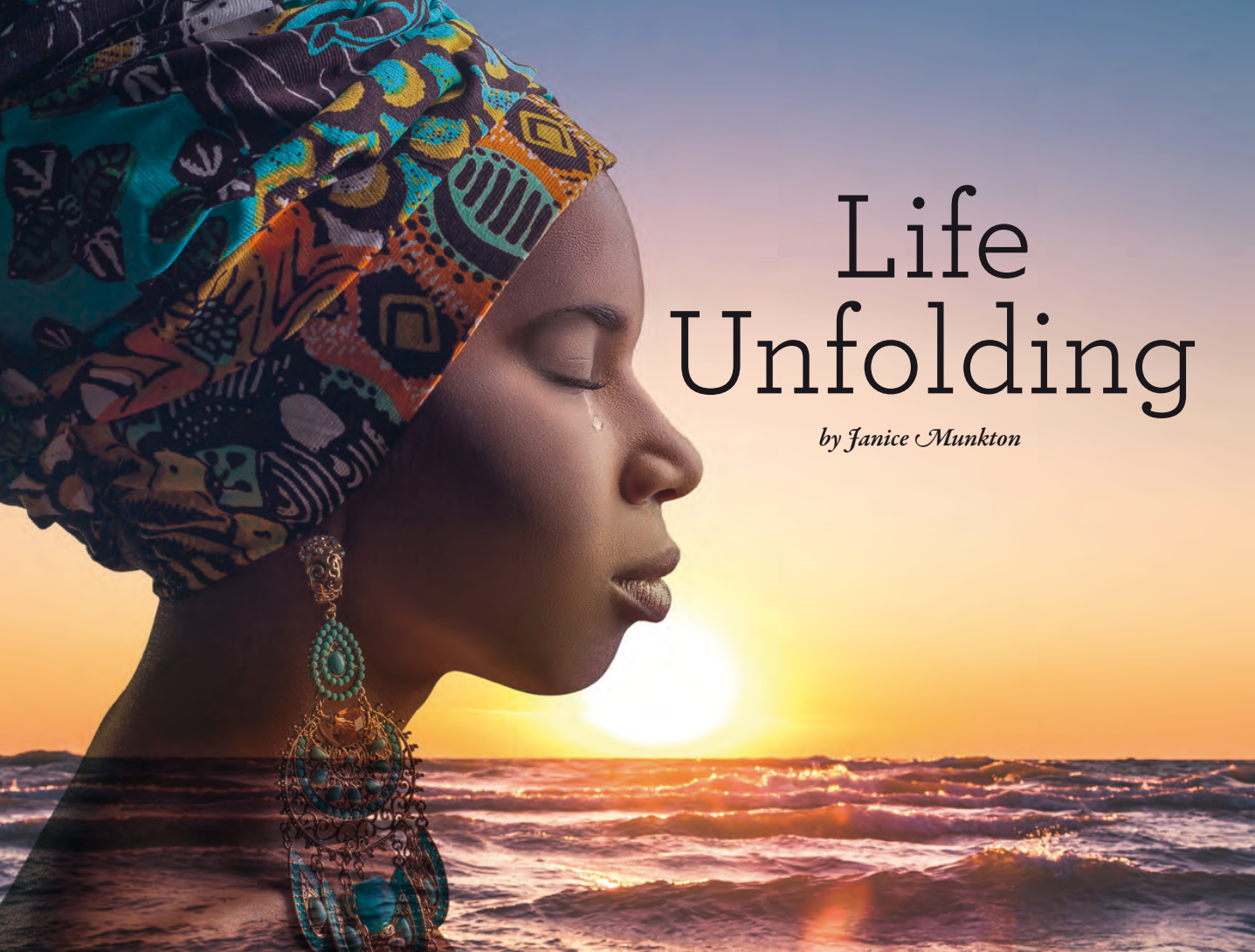


found a clerical job, just enough to make ends meet. My father moved in to assist with caring for my girl, and within another three months, one of the old partners in the firm ordered me in the kindest way possible, to return to part-time studying. Two years later I found a wonderful new partner in life, we got married and had a little boy. It took another eight years of intense effort of part-time studying to get my Masters degree while all the time juggling between the demands of my budding career and raising our two children. Life had presented new challenges but all of them were attainable and most of them were a pleasure to meet.

I often think back to that morning when my mother appeared before me, radiant with happiness and bathed in a spiritual aura exuding a love that exceeds anything I have ever been able to give myself. As a professional psychiatrist, I cannot say objectively and with certainty if the appearance of my deceased mother and the beautiful spiritual experience it triggered in me was a true visitation from the dead, or something internally generated by the stress and turmoil I was undergoing at the time. My eventual training as a psychotherapist would clearly indicate the latter, but my longer and much deeper training as a human has left me in no doubt that the experience was real, that it was of the highest form of spiritual assistance I have ever experienced, and is something I would wish for everyone to experience in some form or other before the end of their days on Earth.

The feeling of overwhelming love that surrounded me for months after that morning meeting come flooding back to me every time I enter my private home sanctum and turn my thoughts and devotions to my Creator and to the wonderful mother I was privileged to have for my first eight years of life. Love was the overwhelming message that day, and remains for me the most important revelation I have received, either from beyond the grave, or from the magnificent workings of my all too human mind.





# Life Unfolding

by Janice Munkton

**T**HERE are those who believe that everything in life is just as it should be. When we meet with this kind of idealism in daily life, we're likely to consider the person who thinks like this as an impractical dreamer, and perhaps a fool. Yet this attitude is just the thing necessary for our survival as a species; for if we cease to hope, to plan, to idealise, then we cease to be separated from the so-called lower animals.

Certainly, there are times when we come to think that life is not worth the struggle we put into it. We work constantly for achievement, but when our ambitions are fulfilled, we are rarely happy. And if we do find that haven of contentment, it is often an unstable thing, easily snatched away by envy or hatred from others.

It is interesting to note that when we were younger, we didn't have concerns for the future; the present seems to be all that we lived for. And when we are older, we tend to rely on the past, seeking security in what we have achieved already. Our lives have been a patchwork of fleeting experiences that have come and gone far too quickly it seems.

And then there is a nagging discontent that haunts us

because we know we are living a lie when we claim belief in things in which we have no belief; worry over things that barely concern us; and pay continuous lip service to those about us whom we feel merit our attention for one reason or another. It is indeed tragic how much of our lives we waste in imaginary battles with imaginary foes.

There are so many things we do not understand about life, with its complexities being only the smallest part of the total mystery. And, of course, life is full of questions which often torment the mind, but we can only hope to find answers if we will embrace the mysteries of life even though we may have to accept that no answer will necessarily be forthcoming.

We should then learn to be seekers, in the sense of Gibran's words, never stationary but always moving ahead, secure in the knowledge that life, like the rose, unfolds itself.

*We wanderers, ever seeking the lonelier way,  
begin no day where we have ended another day;  
and no sunrise finds us where sunset left us."*

*-- Kahlil Gibran, "The Prophet"*





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**Y**OU ARE one with the universe, and share the beauty, harmony and symmetry of all things. The conscious purpose and direction of the Cosmic instructs and directs everything, and you can learn the direction and purpose of a life meant just for you.

The psychic self is an innate Cosmic faculty of conscious volition that all humans possess but few understand and can use. If you want more in life than just your daily hard work..., if you are seeking a way of accomplishing the most fulfilling you can for the rest of your life..., if happiness, peace and justice for all is what you seek..., then learn to attune with your deeper self, and experience the Cosmic Consciousness that you already possess deep in yourself.

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Just living is not enough.  
One must have sunshine,  
freedom, and a little flower.

*-- Hans Christian Andersen --*