

heartfulness

purity weaves destiny

Notes of Seva
in an Age of
Visibility

DAAJI

The SACRED
Principles of
Practice

**N.S. NAGARAJA
& JOSHUA
POLLOCK**

Ahimsa: Living in
Harmony

**BHUSHAN
BHUKTE**



Service



“

My heart was in a cage. My life was a long struggle to find happiness, to overcome fear, and to find love I had lost. I did not give up, and that is what my story is about.

—ICHAK K. ADIZES

”



Presenting a wonderful life journey written by Dr. Ichak K. Adizes

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Foreword by Daaji



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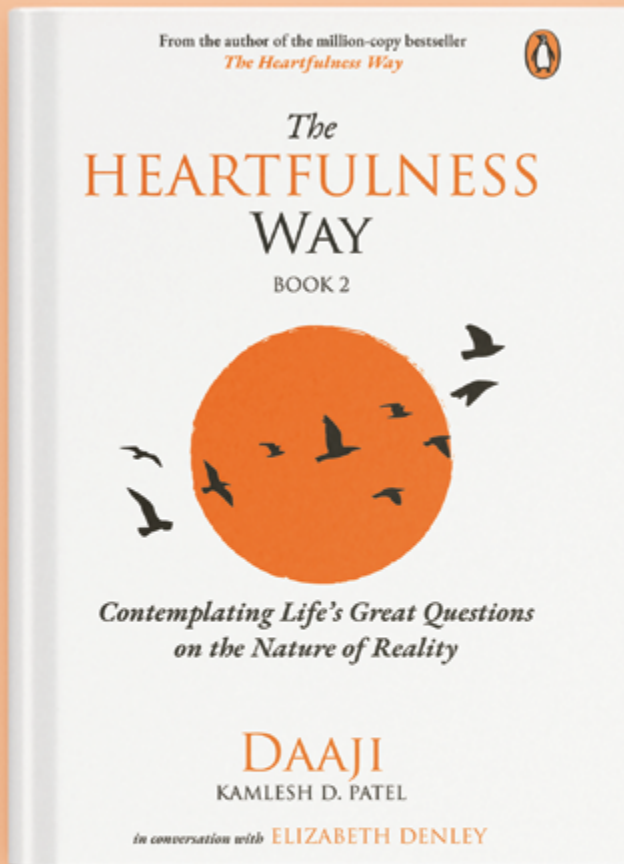


NEW RELEASE

From the author of the million-copy bestseller
The Heartfulness Way

The HEARTFULNESS WAY, BOOK 2

Contemplating Life's Great Questions on the Nature of Reality



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Daaji,
Author,
Global Guide of
Heartfulness



Elizabeth Denley
Author,
Spiritual Trainer in
Heartfulness

In *The Heartfulness Way*, Book 2, Daaji continues with the conversational format that he used so effectively in the previous volume, this time with Elizabeth Denley. Daaji takes us through the journey of expanding consciousness to the ultimate realization of the purpose of human life.

Essentially, *The Heartfulness Way*, Book 2 is a guidebook for any of us wishing to transform from our current state, with all our beliefs, limitations, fears and weaknesses, in order to realize happiness, balance and our full potential in this very lifetime.

Daaji outlines the approach required, which is clear and practical, maps out the journey and provides the practices and tools needed. He sheds light on the obstacles and the solutions to help us overcome them. His approach is simple and experiential and can be practiced by anyone with interest and willingness while working and living a normal family life.

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heartfulness
purity weaves destiny



Dear Readers,

With the June issue, *Heartfulness Magazine* begins a new phase. Starting with this issue, regular sections will feature articles on spiritual practice, yoga, integrative approaches to wellness, and current research on meditation, along with spiritual guidance for the seeker's journey. The magazine will continue to evolve in the months ahead. Reader contributions have long been central to the magazine, and they will continue through Reader Voices, a featured section in each issue.

The theme of this issue is service. In "Notes on Seva in an Age of Visibility," Daaji writes about what happens to us when we make a display of seva, selfless service. Babuji, in a 1961 letter reprinted in this issue, writes: "Where there is service together with the thought of service, Reality will not be available."

Roma Tandon, in "Beyond the Pill: What Truly Heals", writes about a pharmacist whose work she came to know after he had passed away, through patients who spoke his name with gratitude. He knew them by name, listened to their worries, and made each visit feel human. "What truly heals," she writes, "goes far beyond the pill."

We welcome your reflections, experiences, and other submissions. Please visit heartfulness.org/magazine/contribute or use the QR code below.

Happy reading,
The Editors





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SHRI RAM CHANDRA OF SHAHJAHANPUR

Shri Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur (1899-1983), affectionately known as Babuji, was a revolutionary spiritual scientist and philosopher. He was the founder of the present-day system of Raja Yoga meditation, known as Heartfulness.



DAAJI

Daaji is the Heartfulness Guide. He is an innovator and researcher, equally at home in the fields of spirituality, science, and the study of consciousness. His work opens new pathways for understanding and experiencing human potential.



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spiritual practice

“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”

MARGARET J. WHEATLEY





The SACRED Principles of Practice:

AN INTRODUCTION

A new series explores the deeper principles of spiritual practice, showing how a seeker moves beyond a surface-level approach toward spiritual growth and inner transformation.

BY N.S. NAGARAJA AND JOSHUA POLLOCK

A spiritual path is, at its heart, a response to a practical problem: how is the soul to be elevated beyond its present condition? Some paths understand this elevation as an entrance into divine realms after death; others, like the Heartfulness way, understand the journey as unfolding over the course of one's life. In either case, the path gives form to aspiration through a method—prayer, meditation, contemplative practice, or another discipline. Yet at the heart of any such method are underlying principles—universal in nature—that determine how deeply the method can work. To engage any method deeply and with understanding is to begin engaging these principles.

A method gives spiritual practice its form and direction: how we prepare, how we hold the body, what thought we hold or intention we offer, how we relate to what arises within, and the regularity with which we practice. These elements are essential. But a practitioner may observe them faithfully for years, and still the practice does not open to the depth of which it is capable. Does the limitation lie in the method itself? Frequently, it lies in the depth of our engagement

with it. The spiritual principles at the heart of a method become fully alive only when we engage them with sensitivity and understanding. The method then becomes a dynamic catalyst for our transformation.

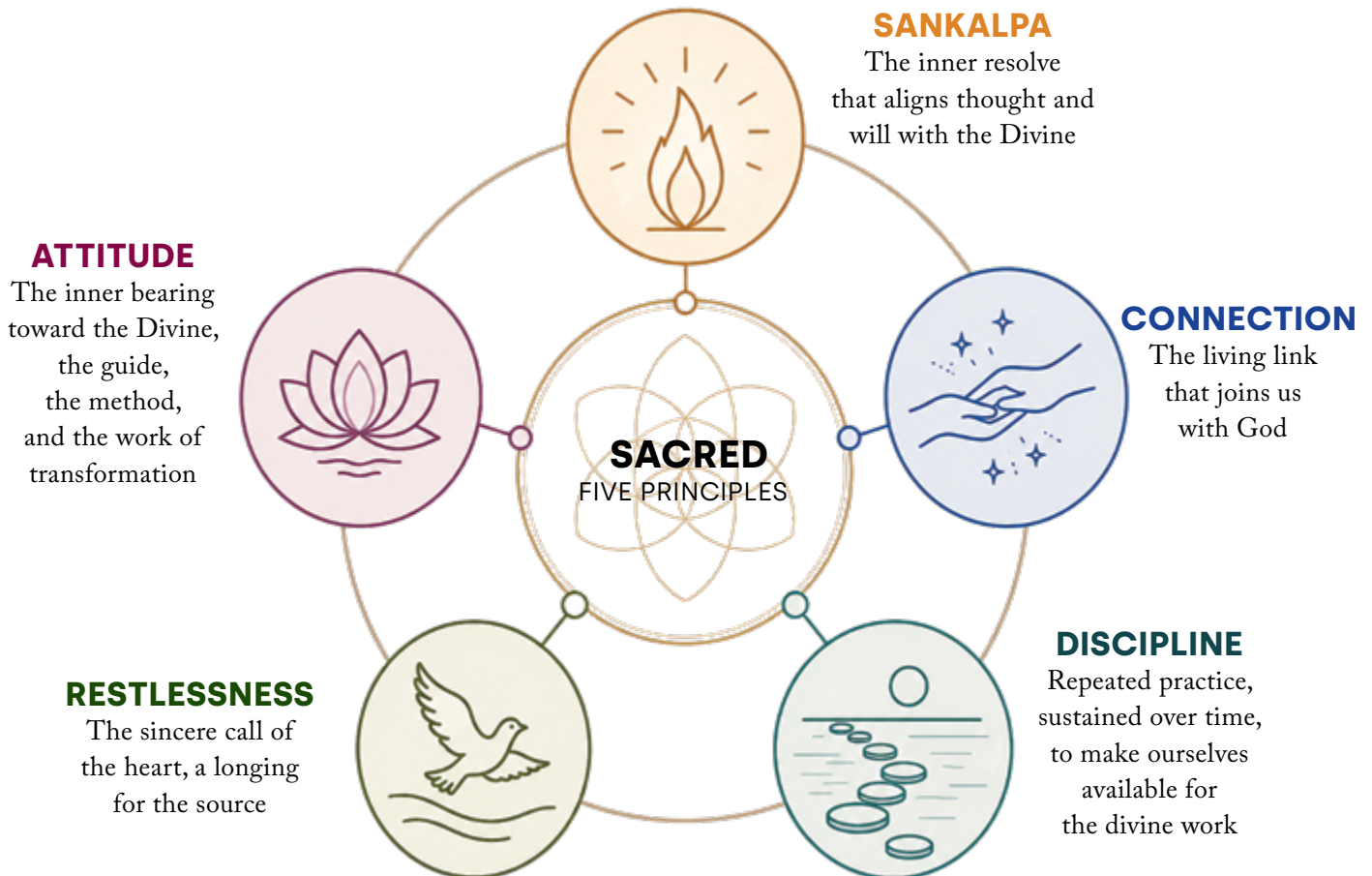
Why must our participation go this deep? Because what we seek is not within the reach of body or mind alone. Body and mind influence one another in both directions, but each communicates only its own condition. A tense body can disturb the mind, and an agitated mind can unsettle the body. A collected mind can bring balance to the body. In each case, one part of our being impresses its own state upon another. But neither body nor mind can elevate itself beyond its own condition, much less confer the divine nature upon us. Only the Divine is able to confer its nature. The principles articulated in this series describe how a seeker becomes inwardly prepared for the Divine: as one's practice is undertaken with greater sensitivity to these underlying principles, the seeker's inner condition becomes increasingly able to receive and attract the divine influence that alone transforms the being.

This same truth applies when we seek to support another person’s spiritual journey. We do not transform another by personal will, thought, or effort alone. To help another in any real sense, we too must become inwardly aligned with the Divine, so that what moves through us is not merely our own intention, but the divine influence that transforms.

These principles can be gathered under the acronym SACRED—*Sankalpa*, Attitude, Connection, REstlessness, and Discipline. Sankalpa is the subtle inner resolve by which thought and will are offered toward divine purpose, drawing forth the divine response that alone makes such offering effectual. Attitude, or *bhava*, is the seeker’s inner bearing toward the

Divine, the guide, the method, and the work of transformation. Connection is the living link through which the seeker becomes joined with God. Restlessness is the sincere call of the heart, the raw longing for the Source that gives urgency to the whole endeavor. Discipline is repeated practice, sustained over time, through which we make ourselves available for the Divine to work in whatever way is needed.

Once, there was a gardener who tended a rose garden for many years. He followed every rule of gardening: watering at sunrise, pruning at precise angles, tending the soil with care. The garden was orderly. Yet the roses remained small, scentless, and pale, and the gardener could not understand why.





Then, one day, a master gardener came to visit. He watched the gardener work for a while, then said, “The rose does not bloom for the shears. It blooms for the sun.” The gardener pondered these words for many years.

One morning, it occurred to him that the life in the roses was the same life that moved in him, and a longing arose in him to experience that unity, and with it a wish for the roses: *may they know it too*. His hands were gentler now and his listening more attentive; life meeting life in the early morning light.

And so, his daily rounds continued, no longer as a gardener performing his work but as someone visiting old friends. The roses grew vibrant, their fragrance filling the garden.

What awakened in the gardener awakens in the seeker by the same path. Although this series will take the five principles one at a time, they do not act in isolation. Each will be easier to study separately, but in practice, they continually touch and modify one another. Their deeper relationship will become clearer as the series unfolds and will be gathered together in a final piece.

The five principles are distinguishable at the surface and progressively indistinct at depth. They are like meridians on a globe: separate lines at the equator, converging as they near the pole, and at the pole, no longer five but one. The practitioner who refines any one of them deeply finds its boundaries dissolving into the others, until what was five becomes a single orientation of the whole being. This is the destination toward which all five lead, and into which any one of them, taken to its depth, opens.

The series begins next month with sankalpa.

FROM HEARTFULNESS INSTITUTE

The Heartfulness Institute is a global not-for-profit organization offering heart-based meditation, a yogic practice for inner well-being and collective harmony.

<https://heartfulness.org/global/>





“Your vision will become clear
only when you can look into your own heart.
Who looks outside, dreams;
who looks inside, awakes”

CARL JUNG

guidance on the way

Notes on Seva in an Age of Visibility

Why seva, at its purest, leaves no record, how inner life and outer behavior form one continuous field, and what selfless service does to the one who serves.

BY DAAJI

“To love is to serve while stepping aside.” —Babuji [Shri Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur, 1899–1983], message of Saturday, May 12, 2001, received by H el ene Peyret, *Whispers from the Brighter World*.¹

In the early years at Shahjahanpur, before the Mission had even grown enough to cast a shadow, Babuji’s home itself was the ashram. *Abhyasis* [practitioners] came from the south of India and beyond, and they ate and slept under his roof. As a host, he would draw water from the tube-well himself and carry the bucket to the bathroom. When a South Indian guest sat down to eat, Babuji made sure there was curd on the plate,

knowing the meal would feel incomplete without it. A European guest, unused to spice, would find bread, butter, cheese, and simply cooked vegetables waiting. Sometimes he himself would stand and quietly fan the guest while they ate.

Where does that kind of care come from? Can it be taught? Can it really arise from any rule that a host “ought” to behave in a certain way? It seems to come from somewhere much further in, where love has not yet been separated from its expression.

I begin here because service has become very loud in this century, while the thing itself has grown

very quiet. We publish our volunteering. We photograph our generosity. Entire professions now exist around the performance of being helpful.

And yet, if you walk through the *bhandara* grounds after a special celebration at four in the morning, while the stars are still holding their shape, you may find someone quietly sweeping fallen leaves. You will almost certainly not recognize them. They are not waiting to be recognized. They are simply doing what needs to be done—and something else is being done to them as they do it, though they would be embarrassed if you asked them to name it.



This is the first thing worth noticing, and the easiest to miss: seva [selfless service], in its purest form, does not leave a record. That is not a failure of our record-keeping. It is the nature of the thing. Whatever it accomplishes within the one who serves cannot be photographed.

The Vibration You Carry

There is a vibratory field around every practitioner, whether they are aware of it or not. Ancient texts had a word for this that modern language has mostly dropped—*tejas*—the subtle radiance of a life that has come to rest in itself. This field cannot be faked or hidden. Someone who has meditated deeply walks into a room, and something in the room adjusts.

For generations, we took this on faith. We no longer have to.

In 2010, neuroscientist Uri Hasson and his team at Princeton published a study in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* showing that when two people are in genuine

communication, their brain activity begins to synchronize.² The listener's brain actually starts to anticipate the speaker's patterns, running slightly ahead of them. This coupling happens beneath conscious awareness. Neither person is choosing it.

For a life of seva, this is not a small detail. One surely cannot be peaceful inside while constantly creating turbulence outside, and you cannot be turbulent inside while projecting peace. The field tells on us, without fail.

A trainer who gives a sitting while quietly harboring irritation toward the abhyasi in front of them is not giving the sitting they think they are giving. The work of meditation and the work of behavior are not two separate projects, however convenient it might be to imagine them that way. The inner and outer are one continuous field.

This is why Babuji said that how you sit in meditation and how you treat the stranger at your door are already the same act. When your inner life deepens, alignment comes naturally to you and

eventually becomes the character of your presence. The spiritual life, at its fullest potential, has no off switch.

If this sounds austere, consider it from the other side: the small kindnesses, the barely heard courtesies, the way you speak to the person at the grocery checkout—all of it is already part of your *sadhana*, or practice, already part of what is being woven in you.

Being Available

There is a well-loved story from one of the bhandaras at Shahjahanpur.

It had been a long evening, and Babuji had been sitting with guests for hours. It was nearly half past ten at night when he suddenly appeared at Chariji's room. He called him by name and said, "You have not eaten yet. Please come with me, I have prepared a place for you inside where you can eat. Food has been kept ready for you."

Chariji [Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari, third guide of

There is a vibratory field around every practitioner, whether they are aware of it or not. Ancient texts had a word for this that modern language has mostly dropped—*tejas*—the subtle radiance of a life that has come to rest in itself.





When your inner life deepens, alignment comes naturally to you and eventually becomes the character of your presence. The spiritual life, at its fullest potential, has no off switch.

the Heartfulness tradition] didn't know what to say; he simply followed. Babuji sat with him while he ate.

The striking thing, as the story is remembered, is that Babuji did not ask whether Chariji had eaten. He knew. In the middle of a home full of guests, preparations, and responsibilities, he had somehow kept track of the one person under his roof who had been overlooked.

This is what true availability looks like. It is not a policy. It is not three neatly alliterated words on a laminated card. It is a quality of attention that stays tuned—gently, without strain—to whoever might need something. We don't realize how big a difference the seemingly small things make, like talking to someone lovingly or sharing in another's pain. We are happy

to share in someone's pleasure, but are we there for them in their moments of pain, too? One who follows the path of service must be accessible, approachable, and above all, available.

In our age of constant connectivity, we have confused responsiveness with availability. They are not the same. A phone that pings at every notification is responsive. It is not, in any meaningful sense, available. Availability is what remains when the noise subsides, and something in you is still listening.

Madame Hélène Peyret, whose life's work was recording the Whispers, offered a quieter example of this same quality. Late in her life, when her health was failing, Babuji told her: "You serve us with abnegation. We appreciate this unique commitment. If they were in your health condition, many would have given up." She did not stop. She wrote even when it was painful. She stayed available even when it cost her, which is the only time availability can really be tested.

When Ego Dresses as Service

Here the teaching turns, and we have to step carefully. The ego is a subtle creature, and nowhere does it hide more effectively than inside the robes of devotion.

A meditation practitioner becomes a meditation trainer. A few years

pass. One morning, they notice—with a flicker of surprise—that they now feel slightly superior to the abhyasis who come to them. They have become a "cleaner of hearts." Cleaning, after all, seems to require a position above what is being cleaned. The title meant to humble them has, by slow and almost invisible degrees, done the opposite.

The sage Ashtavakra saw this trap clearly. The moment you decide to drop the ego, the one doing the dropping is the ego itself, in a new costume. The moment you perform humility, you have already lost it. What was humble was the absence of trying—and now the effort itself has contaminated it.

So, what is to be done? Nothing, and everything.

The Bhagavad Gita gives us a phrase that Sahaj Marg has always taken seriously: *nishkama karma*—labor without attachment to its fruits. This is often misread as indifference to outcomes. It is not. It is action so fully offered to something larger than oneself that the question of one's own gain never even forms.

When a mother tends to a feverish child at three in the morning, she is obviously not calculating spiritual merit. She is simply present. The ego has not been dramatically defeated; it has been bypassed. This is the real "technology" of seva. When

One who follows the path of service must be accessible, approachable, and above all, available.

attention rests fully on another, the self is, for a while, forgotten.

This is also why performative humility is so easy to spot and so corrosive. A man who bows too deeply and praises too elaborately is, in the end, announcing himself. Real humility has a different texture. It radiates what Lalaji, by all accounts, radiated: a dignified inner state, anchored in the unseen, expressing itself in quiet love. He was not trying to be humble. He simply was not in the way.

Stale Chapatis at Fatehgarh

One of the most moving stories in our tradition comes from a visit Babuji made to Fatehgarh to spend a few days in the presence of Lalaji [Shri Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh, first guide of the Heartfulness tradition]. There were no other abhyasis there.

Lalaji, whose monthly salary was barely enough to support his household, sat down to eat with his beloved disciple. They shared from the same plate, in

the northern way, and ate stale chapatis.

I find myself returning to that scene often. The two greatest Masters our tradition has known, sharing a simple, leftover meal, with nothing to mark the moment. No photographs, no witnesses, and no self-consciousness about how little there was on the plate.

Lalaji was known to take, at times, only a decoction of tulsi leaves with a little milk, and nothing more. Yet he made tea for guests who needed it. His own needs had grown small, and his availability to others had grown large. These two movements tend to happen together, though we rarely notice the pattern.

This is not a sermon on poverty. It is a teaching about what falls away when the self stops insisting on itself. A great deal of what we think we need turns out to be noise. A great deal of what we label as service turns out, on closer inspection, to be the presentation of the self.

The silent work, done purely for love, costs very little and changes a great deal.

The Chemistry of Cheerfulness

Modern research is slowly catching up with what the Masters have always known: service is a gift to the one who serves.

Across the last two decades, studies in the emerging neuroscience of altruism have shown that acts of kindness—especially toward strangers—create measurable changes in the brain.³ There is a clear neural link between generosity and well-being.⁴ Giving, quite literally, rewires the giver. Dopamine pathways light up. Vagal tone—the body’s measure of nervous-system calm—improves. Habitual kindness lays down new neural grooves, and the brain, with its astonishing plasticity, begins to prefer them.

But here is the part research can only circle around: when service is done cheerfully, its transforming power multiplies. When it is done resentfully, with the tight jaw of duty, something in us stays blocked. The chemistry is different, and the heart knows this.

Cheerfulness reflects in one’s attitude toward service. Imagine a son returning home from college after two years away. The father would never mutter, “What the hell, he’s back?” He would jump

The silent work, done purely for love, costs very little and changes a great deal.



from his chair in joy. That same warmth should greet anyone who comes asking for help, whether for directions or for a meditation session. Real warmth like that can only come from an overflowing inside.

If that overflow isn't there yet, the answer isn't to fake it. The answer is to sit in meditation, let the heart be filled, and allow service to flow naturally from that fullness. Force is not the way.

The flowering tree does not labor to attract bees. It simply flowers, and the bees arrive. This is one of the oldest secrets in our tradition, and one of the most easily forgotten.

The Art of Anonymity

We return, in the end, to where we began: Babuji in the small Shahjahanpur house, standing beside a guest and fanning him while he eats. Lalaji and Babuji sharing a plate of stale chapatis in Fatehgarh. The trainer who sweeps leaves at dawn without anyone around to notice. Madame Peyret, writing through her illness because the work matters more than her comfort.

What unites these scenes is not simply that people are serving. It is that the serving has become almost transparent. The server has, to some degree, disappeared. What remains is a clear, quiet channel

through which something larger can move.

This is the final honesty of seva. The Masters have always pointed to it as the highest practice for a reason that is both gentle and exacting: in action of this kind, the ego finds no ground to stand on. It is epitomized best by the lives of all those whose entire existence has been devoted to the cause of spirituality in the service of others, a service that they undertake with unwavering faith.

To serve as the Masters have done—with the whole soul—is to hold nothing back and fully open the heart to the Divine, without calculating the hows and the whys of what must be accomplished.

There is a line worth holding close: the greatest service we can offer is the slow, unseen transformation worked in the one who serves. To grow into what the Masters exemplified: simplicity, love, and a kind of spiritual transparency through which grace can move freely.

We do not arrive there by trying to be great. We arrive there by becoming smaller, cheerfully, for long enough that something larger can enter.

A life of seva, lived quietly, is how a human being becomes the flowering tree. The bees will come. They do not need to be called.

FROM DAAJI

Daaji is the Heartfulness Guide and president of Shri Ram Chandra Mission.

daaji.org



¹ *Whispers from the Brighter World*, messages received through intercommunication from elevated souls.

² Greg J. Stephens, Lauren J. Silbert, and Uri Hasson, "Speaker-Listener Neural Coupling Underlies Successful Communication," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 107, no. 32 (August 10, 2010): 14425–30, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1008662107>.

³ Jorge Moll, Frank Krueger, Roland Zahn, Matteo Pardini, Ricardo de Oliveira-Souza, and Jordan Grafman, "Human Fronto-Mesolimbic Networks Guide Decisions about Charitable Donation," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 103, no. 42 (October 17, 2006): 15623–28, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0604475103>.

⁴ Stephen G. Post, "Altruism, Happiness, and Health: It's Good to Be Good," *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine* 12, no. 2 (2005): 66–77, https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327558ijbm1202_4.

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True Simplicity

In this 1961 letter, SHRI RAM CHANDRA of Shahjahanpur (BABUJI) reflects on the nature of desireless service, what truly qualifies a teacher, and what it means to encounter genuine simplicity—and why each of these matters for the seeker's path.¹

I have gone through your letter. There is no harm if the remembrance of this swamiji comes to your mind. Thoughts of good persons must certainly come. Only I am left. Please consider me to be your servant, who sweeps the house and removes all the dirt. Please consider swamiji as the Master and me as the servant. I have no hesitancy in rendering service to you and I desire that the recompense for my service may always be paid to him. By doing so, I will be happy and my service will be noted down in Nature's ledger as done without any expectation of recompense as desireless service. But I must write this point: in any and every circumstance, keep your spiritual advancement in mind.

I have written in a straightforward manner. Why, you may say that it is a true rendering of my own condition. The servant's thoughts are on service, while the Master's are on the property over which he is the Master. Where there is service, property is non-existent.

Here is another point. Where there is service together with the thought of service, Reality will not be available. Then where is Reality? It is only found where service is rendered without any impressions of service being formed.

Brother, have you ever seen such a person? I think so, but in what guise? Have you seen him in the showy guise of a sadhu [holy man, ascetic] or in the guise of a householder? You may decide this for yourself. But if you ask me, I will put forward the lack of experience of my youth, and it is this: As long as there was colorfulness in my nature (not in any bad sense), I was searching for colorfulness in clothes and was always unsuccessful. Finally, I left it to God and always my prayer was that one should come to me who would be his own example or symbol, without my making any search. Finally God answered it. It is possible that by then the guise of colorfulness had vanished from my heart.



We have sometimes seen simplicity and peace in persons, but most of them were such that there was no hint of saintliness in them. Even if such persons came to view, this battered individual that is my self was so roasted, turned and roasted, that I could hardly praise the greatness of such ancients. For such purpose, I have no tongue.

So I think no one came into your view who satisfied your ideas, because if you had found such a person you would not have searched for another.

Men certainly become available who are likely to help us be successful in our work. It is also possible that even then we do not take their help. The reason is that we do not make ourselves deserving of such help, though we do go in search. Now, how do we make ourselves deserving? It is needless for me to write about this. You know it yourself. But each person knows it only in accordance with his own wisdom.

First one must know the state of the teacher on whose form one can meditate, that is, the condition, position or level. He alone is fit for this purpose who has achieved *laya* in Brahm [merger in God], and the difference between Master and servant remains only for speaking. Any person who is of a lesser state is not worthy of having his form meditated upon.

If we desire to begin meditation on a person merely because of their simplicity, in my opinion, Nur-Jahan is fit for this purpose. Once Jahangir gave two pigeons into Nur-Jahan's hands. Accidentally, one of them escaped from her hold and flew away. Jahangir asked her how the pigeon flew away. She released the other one and said that it flew away like this. Such an example of utter simplicity and innocence can scarcely be found.

Meditation on the form of a person who is in *laya* with Brahm should be considered to be

amruth, meaning nectar. If such a person cannot be found, and meditation is done on the form of another person, you can only reach the level that this person has achieved. If a person like Nur-Jahan is found, and you offer your devotion to her simplicity, then such things will develop in you too.

This is not the age of Jahangir. If, by accident, our vision falls on a person of peace, but who is not free from dirt, fear, *viksbep* [fickleness], and showiness, and we begin meditation on his form, these things will form in us too and the poison will spread inside us.

So it is best to try to achieve direct love for the Divine, and if anyone is found who can give you illumination, take his help, dive into your own waves and enjoy the fun.

I write this so that you can read it and think deeply about its contents. I do not wish you to meditate on dry bones. For that, only such a person is fit who has allowed his character to be moulded like mine.

FROM HEARTFULNESS INSTITUTE

The Heartfulness Institute is a global not-for-profit offering heart-based meditation, a yogic practice for inner well-being and collective harmony.

<https://heartfulness.org/global/>



Ram Chandra (Babuji), "True Simplicity," in *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, vol. 5 (Spiritual Hierarchy Publication Trust, 2015), 21.



Spaces That Help Us GROW

At a Heartfulness meditation retreat, safe spaces, nature, and community fostered a depth of belonging that shifted how young participants saw themselves and their purpose—a finding with implications for youth mental health.

BY DR HESTER O'CONNOR AND VIVEK SHEKHAR

In recent years, loneliness has been described as an epidemic, affecting people of all ages. The U.S. Surgeon General warned in 2023 that social isolation poses health risks comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. The World Health Organization followed suit, declaring loneliness a global public health concern. The crisis is particularly acute for young people: despite digital hyperconnection, many feel more isolated than ever.

Against this backdrop, a study published in *OBM Integrative and Complementary Medicine* in 2026 offers a possible antidote.¹ Heartfulness researchers Vivek

Shekhar and Hester O'Connor explored the experiences of Indian youth during a retreat at Kanha Shanti Vanam meditation center in Hyderabad. What the participants reported was not just relaxation or stress relief, but something deeper—a sense of belonging, transformation, and peace that was life-changing.

A Retreat in the Heart of India

Kanha Shanti Vanam blends spiritual practice with environmental stewardship through organic farming, tree planting, and conservation



projects. In 2024, the center hosted “Youth Unite,” a three-day retreat for 128 students. The study focused on in-depth interviews with ten young adults (18–27) visiting Kanha for the first time.

The setting itself played a crucial role. Participants spoke of Kanha as a “mother”—a safe, nurturing environment where they could let their guard down. The natural beauty, the rhythm of meditation, and the absence of judgment created what psychologists might call a “container,” a space where people feel secure enough to explore themselves.



The Power of Belonging

One of the most striking findings was the sense of belonging participants experienced. In a society where academic pressure, family expectations, and stigma around mental health often isolate young people, Kanha offered something rare: community. Several described feeling as if they had found a family. Others spoke of falling in love with the place itself, as though the land and the people together offered a loving embrace.

This echoes what developmental psychologists have long theorized:

people thrive when they feel securely attached. Just as infants need a caregiver's presence to explore the world, young adults need spaces where they feel accepted to take risks, dream, and grow. At Kanha, belonging extended beyond human relationships to include nature itself. Participants described trees, gardens, and the atmosphere as part of their community. One participant summed her experience as follows:

“All that I need in my life is only love. And in Kanha, I felt love in every inch of that. What I am feeling. I'm

actually speechless. What I am feeling about Kanha can't be expressed in words. It is another kind of love, which I hadn't experienced before. That you belong to Kanha... My heart is beating, my veins are pumping. My mind is working. So, in every inch of my body, I felt that. And secondly, I felt my soul.” — Hamaza, study participant.

Transformation and Purpose

Beyond belonging, the retreat sparked transformation. Participants reported new clarity



about their goals. One young man decided to shift from medicine to agriculture after failing the MBBS entrance exam, calling himself a “doctor of plants.” Another resolved to tackle global hunger through farming, saying, “A single grain of rice has importance.” These are not trivial changes—they represent a reorientation of life purpose.

Such transformations highlight the potential of contemplative practices to do more than soothe stress. They can catalyze meaning-making, helping individuals reframe their identities and aspirations. In a world where many young people feel adrift, this sense of agency is invaluable.

Why Safe Spaces Matter

The study’s findings resonate with broader psychological theories. Donald Winnicott spoke of the “holding environment,” Wilfred Bion of “containment,” and John Bowlby of the “secure base.” All point to the same truth: people need safe spaces to grow. For Indian youth, who face intense competition and limited mental health resources, retreats like Kanha may provide a crucial buffer.

Caveats and Future Directions

The study has limitations. With a self-selecting sample

In an age of digital distraction and social fragmentation, spaces like Kanha Shanti Vanam demonstrate how belonging can be cultivated—not through algorithms or likes, but through meditation, community, and connection to nature.

of ten, the findings cannot be generalized. The interviews took place immediately after the retreat, raising the possibility of “afterglow” effects—temporary euphoria that may fade. Long-term studies are needed to see whether the sense of belonging and transformation persists months or years later.

A Glimpse of What's Possible

At its heart, the study reminds us of something simple yet profound: humans need spaces where they can belong to thrive. In an age of digital distraction and social fragmentation, spaces like Kanha Shanti Vanam demonstrate how belonging can be cultivated—not through algorithms or likes, but through meditation, community, and connection to nature.

For the young people who attended the retreat, it was “magic.” That magic, rooted in

belonging and connection, may be the foundation our lonely world needs to move toward healing and growth.

FROM HEARTFULNESS RESEARCH

Heartfulness Research studies the effects of meditation from both neuroscientific and qualitative perspectives.

heartfulnessinstitute.org/research/



¹ Shekhar V, O Connor H. Transformational Spaces: An Interpretative Phenomenological Inquiry into the Lived Experience of Young People Visiting Kanha Shanti Vanam Meditation Center, Telangana, India. *OBM Integrative and Complementary Medicine* 2026; 11(1) 007; doi:10.21926/obm.icm.2601007.



“To keep the body in good health is a duty... otherwise, we shall not be able to keep the mind strong and clear.”

BUDDHA

Ahimsa: Living in Harmony

An exploration of ahimsa as a foundational principle of Ashtanga Yoga, and of how yoga practice can cultivate inner harmony, compassion, and kindness in thought, word, and action.

BHUSHAN BHUKTE

In a world where conflict is no longer distant—where violence enters our homes daily through the news—Patanjali's first teaching takes on particular urgency. Ahimsa, often translated as nonviolence, is the first of the five yamas [ethical restraints] in Ashtanga Yoga. However, its true essence goes far beyond avoiding physical harm. Rather, ahimsa is a way of being, where one lives in complete harmony with oneself, others, and the universe. It is the cultivation of such inner balance that violence cannot arise at any level of activity—the main ones being *manasa* [thought], *vacha* [word], and *karmana* [action].

Understanding Ahimsa at a Deeper Level

Ahimsa, at its core, is not suppression of aggression but a transformation of consciousness. When the mind is disturbed by anger, greed, or insecurity, violence becomes inevitable. But when

the mind is calm and content, compassion flows naturally. How, then, can there be violence?

Thus, ahimsa is not an external rule to be followed, but an inner state of being; it is not forced kindness, but a spontaneous flowering of compassion; it is not weakness, but strength held in natural restraint.

The Inner Roots of Violence

Yoga teaches that all external conflict begins within. Negative emotions such as anger, jealousy, fear, and excessive desire create internal imbalance.

This imbalance manifests as harmful speech, actions, and even self-destructive behavior.

Particularly, *parigraba* [attachment and accumulation] fuels insecurity and competition, disturbing ahimsa. When we hold on tightly, we begin to fear loss, and that fear often expresses itself as aggression.

Ahimsa as a State of the Heart: Thought, Word, and Action

Ahimsa is not the mere absence of harm; it is the presence of sensitivity.

To truly practice ahimsa, we must refine ourselves at all levels of activity:

- *Manasa* [thought]: Avoiding judgment, hatred, and negativity; cultivating empathy
- *Vacha* [word]: Speaking truthfully, yet gently; words should heal, not hurt
- *Karmana* [action]: Acting with responsibility toward oneself, others, society, and nature

Even subtle actions, such as self-criticism, gossip, and overconsumption, are forms of violence.

Ahimsa in My Life

In our world today, violence is often subtle and normalized: stressful competition, environmental negligence, or emotional insensitivity.

Ahimsa starts at home and is more necessary than ever. It is a guiding principle for sustainable and compassionate living, shifting us from selfish acquisition to selfless contribution. For this, I found support and guidance in my daily yoga practice.

Cultivating Ahimsa through Yoga

Where can I start? Ahimsa develops through conscious and regular practice, ironing out the complexities within:

- Asanas [postures]—a gentle practice helps us develop awareness, aligning action, breath, and mind. It helps us practice pausing before we act.
- Pranayama [breathwork]—helps us calm the mind and develop conscious intent.
- Dhyana [meditation]—when we meditate on the heart, we develop sensitivity, love, and compassion.

Supportive Yogic Practices: Asana for Ahimsa and Inner Harmony

The cultivation of ahimsa is supported by gentle, introspective, and heart-centered asanas that calm the nervous system and expand awareness.





Padmasana

[Lotus pose]

Symbolizes purity and stability, aiding higher consciousness.



Marjariasana-bitilasana

[Cat-cow]

Releases emotional tension and harmonizes breath with movement.



Uttanasana

[Forward bend]

Promotes humility, surrender, and introspection.



Setu bandhasana

[Bridge pose]

Opens the heart, fostering compassion and emotional balance.



Gomukhasana

[Cow face pose]

Helps release deep-seated emotional patterns and inner conflict.



Yoga mudra

Encourages surrender of ego and deep inner reflection.



Try these asanas, along with *Nadi Shuddhi Pranayama*. Scan the QR code above for guided practice. Feel how it affects your inner state.

Ahimsa is not merely a moral principle; it is a state of evolved consciousness. It is the foundation of Ashtanga Yoga and develops through its practice. Through dedicated practice, our thoughts are transformed, our words are refined, our actions purified. Through this inner harmony, we begin to live in true alignment with ourselves and the world around us.

So do not ask yourself, “Is my yoga practice improving?” Ask instead:

Is there peace in my thoughts?
Is there kindness in my responses?
Am I moving, however slowly,
toward ahimsa?

In truth, ahimsa is more than a principle of Yoga; it is the very fragrance of an awakened consciousness.

FROM THE HEARTFULNESS YOGA ACADEMY

Heartfulness Yoga Academy offers accredited, tradition-rooted programs that integrate asanas, pranayama, and Heartfulness Meditation with Yogic Transmission for a holistic approach to yoga.

yogaacademy.heartfulness.org



The Pause That Renews You

RESET, REALIGN, RETURN

A seven-day reset—adjusting sleep, food, movement, and screen time—outlines a gentle path to stress relief, nervous system regulation, and the deeper rest that daily life rarely allows.

BY DR RAGHUVeer S.N., AYURVEDA MEDICAL OFFICER, WELLNESS BY HEARTFULNESS.

Life moves quickly. Between work, responsibilities, and daily routines, we keep moving forward without really noticing how we feel. A little fatigue becomes normal, sleep gets delayed, and meals become irregular. The body begins to feel stiff, while the mind stays busy even after the day ends.

Nothing seems serious at first—just tiredness, occasional acidity, reduced focus, low energy. But these small signals often mean the body is constantly adjusting without time to recover.

Health doesn't usually change suddenly; it shifts slowly when you lose rhythm. Late nights, long sitting, stress, digital overload, and lack of movement all accumulate. Over time, energy drops, digestion

becomes increasingly sensitive, and the mind crowds with thoughts.

Sometimes, what the body needs is not something drastic—just a pause. A few days of mindful care restore rhythm, calm the mind, and allow recovery. Even a week can make a difference.

Why Seven Days Matter

When you slow down for a few days, the body begins to relax. The nervous system settles. Sleep improves, digestion becomes lighter, breathing calms, and the mind gradually quietsens.

In the first couple of days, the body unwinds. By mid-week, people notice deeper sleep and lighter digestion. Towards the end,

energy becomes stabilized, and there is a sense of clarity.

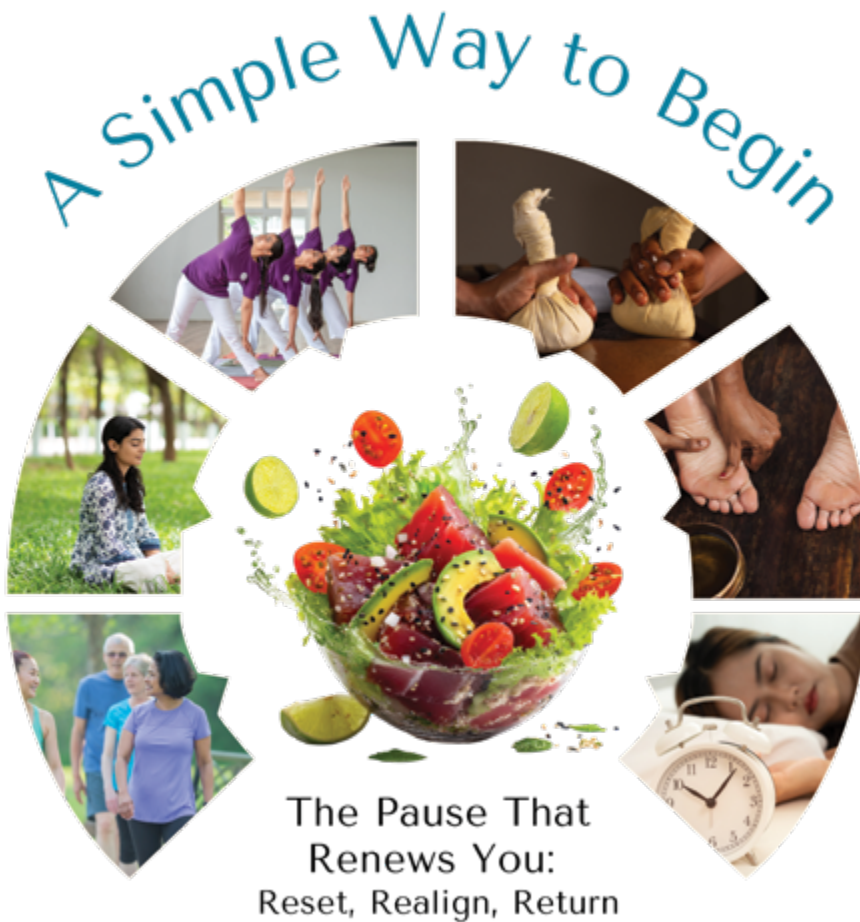
Seven days don't bring dramatic change; they grant the body time to reset and regain its natural balance.

A Small Pause—A Lasting Shift

Taking seven days for wellness doesn't mean stepping away from life. You prepare to return with greater balance. When the body rests and the mind calms, daily responsibilities become easier.

You don't need to wait for exhaustion or illness. Instead, devote a week to mindful care, which resets sleep, improves digestion, and restores energy.





A Simple Way to Begin

You don't need anything complicated. Just follow a few practical steps for seven days.

Eat lighter meals.

Start your day with warm water; keep breakfast simple and finish before 9:00 a.m. Eat a freshly cooked lunch, avoid overeating, and try to finish by 1:00 p.m. Reduce fried, baked, and packaged foods. Finish dinner by 7:30–8:00 p.m. and keep it light—soups,

khichdi, vegetables, or simple home-cooked food.

Sleep on time.

Mute notifications after 9:30 p.m., reduce screens after 10:00 p.m., and get into bed by 10:30 p.m., even if sleep doesn't come immediately. Keep the lights dim and let the body slow down. Wake up at a fixed time, preferably before 6:00 a.m.

Move gently.

Start the morning with a 20–30 minute walk. Avoid intense workouts during these seven days. Take short breaks every 1–2 hours—stand, stretch, or walk for a few minutes. Gentle movement prevents stiffness and boosts circulation.

Practice yoga and breathing.

Do 20 minutes of gentle yoga—stretches, slow movements, and

relaxation postures. Follow with 5–10 minutes of slow breathing or pranayama. Stay calm and comfortable. The goal is relaxation, not exertion.

Reduce digital noise.

Turn off non-essential notifications. Avoid checking your phone immediately after waking. Try keeping one or two screen-free periods during the day. Reduce late-night scrolling to help the mind slow down.

Create moments of stillness.

Take two short pauses in the day. Sit quietly, close your eyes, or lie down for 5–10 minutes. No phone, no conversation. Just rest. These brief pauses help reset mental fatigue.

Don't try to force everything at once. Start with one change, acclimate, and gradually add the others. Even gentle, small steps can create a meaningful reset.

What People Often Notice

Within days, sleep becomes deeper, mornings feel lighter, digestion improves, and the body feels less stiff. Energy becomes steadier, and the mind feels calmer.

Many notice better focus and emotional balance. The constant internal rush reduces, bringing a natural sense of clarity and ease.

These small changes launch a gentle process of detox and rejuvenation. Eating simpler food, improving sleep, practicing yoga, and slowing the mind naturally begin to cleanse and restore the body. Even a short pause resets rhythm and boosts overall well-being.

The Value of a Structured Pause

Since the body benefits from periodic care, a deeper, more structured phase of detox and rejuvenation may be needed at least once a year. A seven-day reset can help restore balance, improve sleep, support metabolism, and bring back clarity and vitality.

During such a period, the emphasis is on gently clearing accumulated strain, improving digestion, calming the nervous system, and restoring natural energy. This can include dietary adjustment, therapeutic yoga, breathing practices, meditation, and guided rest, brought together within a consistent and supportive routine.

With ongoing stress, irregular habits, and constant stimulation, the body and mind gradually lose their natural rhythm. A dedicated seven-day detox and rejuvenation, done at least once a year, helps restore that balance, improve sleep, support metabolism, and bring back clarity and vitality.

A seven-day reset can help restore balance, improve sleep, support metabolism, and bring back clarity and vitality.

In a fast-moving life, even a brief, well-held pause can be enough to restore balance and direction, allowing us to return to our lives with greater steadiness and ease.

FROM WELLNESS BY HEARTFULNESS

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About Us





children

“The goal of education is not to increase the amount of knowledge but to create the possibilities for a child to invent and discover.”

JEAN PIAGET



The Sacred Hair of the Goddess Sif

A goddess wakes by the river to find something precious missing—and the trickster who stole it must answer to the gods of Asgard.

BY RUBY CARMEN

Quite some time ago, during the Viking Age, in the lands of the Norse peoples, there was a goddess. Her name was Sif. You may know her husband; he is the god of thunder and war and goes by the name of Thor. Did you know that Thursday is named after the Norse god Thor? So, he is still remembered in the English-speaking world, especially on Thursdays!

Coming back to the goddess Sif, who is not as well remembered, she was in fact the goddess of fertility, of the earth and of the harvest. So, it only makes sense that her hair was wonderfully golden, like the sun shining on the wheat crops in the fields. And indeed, it is said that Viking farmers worshiped her in days gone by.

Sif was known to have traveled across the Northern Hemisphere, bestowing her blessings and supporting the farmers who toiled on the land so that their families would survive the harsh winters in those lands. Indeed, her very essence was nurturing, nourishing, and sweet generosity. This makes the mischievous and unkind act of her brother-in-law, Loki, even more shocking. Now, Loki is known as a trickster, a joker—he was the god of fire, illusion, and, unsurprisingly, of mischief.

I guess you are wondering what happened! Well, one day, after her travels, Sif was resting by the river and her long, wondrous hair was drying in the sunlight. The soft murmurs of the river had brought her into a meditative sleep, and all around, the birds sang melodiously. It was so peaceful—until it was not. Silently, Loki appeared with ill intent. Although the rock-thrushes, blackbirds, and fairy-wrens, and even the shy robin tried to warn her, Sif was in a deep, deep sleep.

As Loki moved closer to Sif, he took out a pair of shears and, with some effort, cut off Sif's long, golden locks. And in the blink of an eye, Loki disappeared. Just like that. As if in response to this, the clouds covered the sun, and, feeling cold, Sif awoke. Strangely, she felt a chill around her neck and shoulders. She rubbed her eyes and grasped at her head, shocked. Sif, looking down into the waters of the gentle river, saw that her hair was gone. In disbelief, she reached for her magic mirror that she secretly kept in her skirts and saw her reflection. It was so: her hair was shorn off. At this realization, she began to sob with the result that it began to rain all over the northern lands.

In her distress, she made her way back to Asgard. Her husband Thor, catching her appearance and her tear-stained face, thundered, "Who did this to you, my dear wife?" Recovering from her shock, Sif replied, "I do not know, my husband, for I was asleep by the river." Later that evening, the king of the gods, Odin, who was Sif's father-in-law, called a meeting to find out who was the culprit, consulting all the gods and goddesses. It did



not take long to figure out who had done such a foolhardy and careless act: Loki! Thor and Odin's anger was so great that the skies were alight with thunder and lightning.

"*Loki!*" their thunderous voices exploded in unison, and Loki had no choice but to face the consequences of his actions. To this day, no one knows why he did it. Was he jealous of her quiet, creative power, or was it an act of revenge to anger Thor? Nobody knows.

The mischief-loving Loki laughed it off, adding insult to injury. "You know how it is—I happened to have these shears and ..."

Silence!" roared Odin.

Magnificently dignified Sif looked at him wordlessly with piercing silver eyes, her head covered with a gossamer veil to hide her missing locks. As a goddess, she was sacred; even the hair on her head was sacred. How could Loki not know this?!

Loki was sent away for the wrong he had done, and somehow, he had to make it right. His task, you wonder? Loki had to travel to the molten center of the earth, nay, under the earth, not a place of mortals. There he found the gnomes who were skilled smiths. As Loki was the god of fire, the fiery heat of that place did not trouble him too much. With some charm and persuasion, Loki requested that the gnomes use their skill with fire and metal to create a headpiece of the finest intricate silken gold that would appear like hair, fit for a goddess. The gnomes eyed Loki with some suspicion and apprehension, as his reputation was well known. However, the kind-hearted gnomes did his bidding more to alleviate the goddess's suffering than to please Loki, in spite of his flattery and sweet words.

Returning to Asgard, the celestial home of the gods, Loki brought the golden hairpiece for Sif as an apology and a peace offering. It was accepted with some hesitation, as his reputation was so poor (in court there was still concern that this too was a trick). Sif graciously took the golden hairpiece from Loki and wore it with all the majesty of the goddess she was, regaining her silent power.



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“Leadership is not about being in charge.
It is about taking care of those
in your charge.”

SIMON SINEK



The Strategic Meaning of Health

Why a well-lived life depends on four functions—physical health, daily routine, purpose beyond the self, and belonging to a community that loves and is loved in return.

BY ICHAK ADIZES

Can we agree that if we are sick—if we are not healthy—we will either live a shorter life, or live longer but not well?

If that is true, then health is not just one goal among many. It is *the primary goal*, the foundation upon which all other goals depend.

We recognize its importance. Observe our behavior. We greet each other with a glass of wine and say, “to your health.”

So, the strategic question is: *What does it mean to be “healthy?”*

A healthy organic system—and we humans are one—is effective and efficient in both the short and the long run.

Effectiveness means that the system performs the function for which it exists—now and in the future. A kidney, for example, is healthy if it performs what a kidney is supposed to perform, today and tomorrow.

For human beings, the question becomes deeper: What is our function? Why do we exist?

In my case, I am clear:

To serve *tikkun olam* [repairing the world]—now and in the future.

Efficiency, on the other hand, means the system operates with minimal energy waste, in both the short and the long run.

For a long life—or more importantly, a well-lived life—the four functions of PAEI must be actively performed and satisfied.¹

The P Function: Physical Health

First, the **P (Producer)** function.

This is what we traditionally call health: the body performing well.

To be medically and physically healthy.

It includes eating properly, sleeping well, and exercising.

This dimension of health has been extensively covered in the literature. There is no need to elaborate here.



But physical health alone is not sufficient for longevity.

The A Function: Order and Routine

Second, the **A (Administrator)** function.

We need a certain level of routine in life so that as little energy as possible is wasted.

Routine reduces stress.

It minimizes the chaos of continuous, unstructured change.

It prevents unnecessary energy expenditure caused by living in constant disorder.

The E Function: Purpose

Third, the **E (Entrepreneurial)** function.

To live longer, we need a reason to live.

That reason cannot be self-centered. It must be oriented toward serving others' needs.

The moment people retire into a life where they serve no one and nothing—where they feel useless—they begin to deteriorate. They become, in effect, the “walking dead.”

Those who have a reason to get up in the morning remain alive—energetic, engaged, and purposeful.

Purpose prolongs life.

The I Function: Integration and Belonging

Fourth, the **I (Integrator)** function.

Longevity requires being part of a community—starting with strong family ties.

Human beings are not designed to live in isolation.

To feel connected, to belong, to love and be loved—this is not a luxury. It is a condition for health.

Dan Buettner, in his book, *The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer From the People Who've Lived the Longest*, discovered the **(P)** and **(I)** factor already. He studied regions of the world where people celebrated reaching one hundred years of life. Across these diverse cultures, the common denominators for long life were:



- Physical activity embedded in daily life **(P)**
- Strong social and family bonds **(I)**

I am adding two additional factors, based on my own observations:

- **(E) Purpose:** A reason to live
- **(A) Routine:** A structured, low-stress daily life

I have observed that older individuals who maintain a routine are calmer, more stable, and less stressed than those living with constant uncertainty and disruption. Add to it that if one has a reason to get up in the morning, a reason that stimulates them, that entuses them, they too will live longer because a reason to live gives the person energy, and life is energy in action. When there is no more energy, there is no more life.

I have observed that older individuals who maintain a routine are calmer, more stable, and less stressed than those living with constant uncertainty and disruption.

To live longer—and to live well:

- Eat healthy.
- Stay physically active.
- Sleep well.
- Minimize unnecessary stress.
- Maintain a stable, supportive routine.
- Have a purpose that serves others.
- Belong to a community that gives and receives love.
- Never feel alone.

The challenge is not knowing what to do. The challenge is having the willpower to do it.

¹The PAEI framework—Producer, Administrator, Entrepreneur, Integrator—is the author's. See Ichak Adizes, *Managing Corporate Lifecycles* (Paramus, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999).

the

HEARTFUL MIND

with **Daaji**



"My wish is that this series can help you lead a life guided by the heart. Let's embark on this journey together, you won't regret "

- Daaji

Experience 10 immersive episodes where Daaji takes you through simple exercises and practices to find our way amidst the complex network of thoughts, feelings and emotions and external chaos of daily life... Each session of this series is an invitation to the journey inward – to find calm in chaos, heal and deepen relationships, let go of what no longer serves, and rediscover balance and courage. Together, we learn to transform anger into growth, loneliness into connection, and effort into ease – nurturing collective well-being and awakening our highest potential. This series is a heartfelt guide to living with clarity, compassion, and purpose – to lead a truly heartfelt life in a hectic world.

heartfulness
purity weaves destiny

UR
L I F E



experience



environment

“We need to work with nature,
not against it.”

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

OMG

Growing Health, Sustainability, and Education

At Kanha Shanti Vanam, a small hydroponic experiment with microgreens became OMG, a school-based initiative helping children reconnect with food, nature, nutrition, and sustainability.

SUCHITH S. SINDHE IN CONVERSATION WITH **MAMATA SUBRAMANYAM**

Q: Tell me about OMG: What is it and how did it begin?

A: OMG is a young social enterprise working at the intersection of health, nutrition, sustainability, and education. Its mission is simple but urgent: reconnect people, especially children, to food, nature, and healthy living.

The seeds of OMG were planted during the COVID period at Kanha Shanti Vanam, where, under Daaji's guidance, a small hydroponic growing experiment began on his terrace. At a time

when the world was thinking about immunity, resilience, and well-being, Daaji encouraged us to grow fresh, living food locally using modern techniques.

That small experiment became something much bigger. We started cultivating microgreens, which are young, edible greens harvested within seven to fourteen days that are packed with intense flavor and are exceptionally high in nutrition. These tiny greens can contain significantly higher nutrient concentrations than mature vegetables, all while requiring minimal space and water.





What began as a terrace project soon became a purpose-driven enterprise with a mission to make healthy food accessible, desirable, and educational at scale. That is how OMG was born.

Q: OMG started in Kanha Shanti Vanam—the global headquarters of Heartfulness. Did having Kanha as a starting point help OMG grow into what it is now?

A: Kanha was an ideal ecosystem. It gave us space to experiment, values to build on, and guidance at every stage—a rare combination.

During the pandemic, Daaji would regularly have microgreens with other food and often spoke about the importance of healthy eating. He then encouraged us to grow more and make them available to others in Kanha.

What made the journey special was his attention to detail. One day, during a casual conversation, he said something profound: “People who are health-conscious may eat microgreens raw. But if you want everyone to eat them, you must present them in different forms—juices, salads, attractive meals.” It may sound obvious, but it wasn’t. When we become passionate about something, we often expect others to share our conviction. But Daaji was asking us to meet the world where it already was. I took this as a spiritual instruction disguised as a product insight.



We believe in the importance of combining science, nutrition, farming, sustainability, entrepreneurship, and life skills. Every school should have a space where children learn how life grows.

The small terrace initiative soon grew into a company. Daaji named it “OMG,” helped shape its logo, and, of course, inspired its vision.

Q: Education is a big part of how OMG creates impact. Can you tell me more about those initiatives?

A: Education became OMG’s natural next step. During the COVID-19 pandemic, some students from the Heartfulness International School were staying on campus. One evening, they were invited for dinner with Daaji. Like many children, most of them preferred pizza and fries. Very few were interested in salads or green juices.

Daaji noticed this and made a comment that inspired our entire approach: “Don’t just serve children healthy food. Involve them in making it.” He asked us not to prepare the salad for them, but to bring the students into the process. Let them wash, cut, mix, taste, and understand what was on their plate. When children participate, their curiosity is sparked, and habits start to change. That insight became the beginning of OMG Labs.

Today, OMG transforms classrooms into living nature labs, where students grow microgreens, learn hydroponics, understand nutrition, and experience sustainability hands-on. They

grow, harvest, and eat what they produce. They also learn to care for the environment.

We believe in the importance of combining science, nutrition, farming, sustainability, entrepreneurship, and life skills. Every school should have a space where children learn how life grows.

Q: How is OMG going global?

A: What began as a small initiative inside a school at Kanha is now becoming a movement with global relevance.

OMG started with a simple belief: that when children grow their own food, they better understand health, nature, and responsibility. At Kanha, students learned

through hands-on farming with microgreens, connecting nutrition, sustainability, and science in a way textbooks alone could not. They grew food with their own hands, ate what they harvested, and began taking those habits home. Teachers also saw stronger participation because education had become practical and meaningful.

That success pushed OMG to build a structured model for schools. The team developed curriculum-based learning modules and indoor farming labs—OMG Labs—where students learn food systems, climate awareness, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and entrepreneurship through direct experience.

The first major scale-up came in India. OMG partnered with schools and government ecosystems, including an initiative involving thirty Delhi government schools, where teachers were trained, and students were introduced to microgreens education and nutrition learning.

The work also received public appreciation from national and international leaders. On OMG's public platform, leaders including Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, AIIMS Director Dr. M. Srinivas, and World Bank Vice President for South Asia Martin Raiser have shared support and appreciation, recognizing the role of nutrition, sustainability, and practical learning for children.



International recognition came in 2025. At the Commonwealth Youth Awards in London, OMG won the Commonwealth Secretary-General's Special Award. The recognition placed OMG among impactful youth-led initiatives across fifty-six Commonwealth nations for integrating sustainability and climate education into classrooms. Patricia Scotland KC, former Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, publicly praised the initiative, saying sustainability starts in the classroom.

OMG then moved into partnerships. At the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) COP16 in Riyadh, OMG signed an international collaboration with Ghana's Center for Climate and Sustainability Empowerment to bring OMG Labs into schools across Ghana. The focus was on sustainable farming, nutrition, education, and youth empowerment.

OMG has also been represented on global food-systems platforms.

OMG was represented at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome, where we positioned classrooms as living nature labs and linked education with climate, food security, and healthier communities.

The model also entered communities beyond schools. In Fiji and other Commonwealth contexts, OMG's training-based approach demonstrated how microgreens can help women, families, and local groups grow nutritious food in small spaces while creating livelihood opportunities.

To support expansion, OMG established a presence in Sydney, Australia, building pathways for partnerships across the Asia-Pacific region.

What makes OMG global is not geography alone. Every country wants healthier children, meaningful education, and sustainable solutions. OMG brings all three together.

Q: Is there a moment or story that—amidst all of the hard work—has made you feel like OMG is fulfilling its purpose?

A: Yes, many moments. But the most meaningful ones are often the smallest, such as when we hear that a child goes home and explains to their parents why greens matter, or that a family





starts a balcony garden because their child insisted. When children who once rejected vegetables now proudly serve salads they've made themselves, or when students begin saying they want to work in farming, nutrition, or sustainability, we feel that our mission is succeeding.

Such moments remind us that real impact isn't only measured in numbers. It's when a child changes how a family thinks that we know OMG is fulfilling its purpose.

Q: What's next?

A: The vision is simple enough to say in one line: OMG in every school.

We believe that the school of the future will have more than classrooms, computers, and

sports grounds. It will also have a living food lab—a small corner where children learn how to feed themselves and the world they will inherit.

This next chapter is already visible. We are expanding across government and private schools in India and building partnerships with schools and ministries abroad. We are developing AI-enabled learning, integrating nutrition into school meal programs, supporting student entrepreneurship, and shaping a climate and sustainability curriculum that does not sit on a shelf.

Our hope is that OMG Labs become what science labs became in the last century—essential, unremarkable, expected infrastructure for modern education. The next generation

will need more than exam scores. They will need to know how to grow food, nourish themselves, think sustainably, and build resilient communities.

OMG Greens is a sustainability-driven initiative focused on nutrition, education, and practical community impact.

omggreens.com





The Elegant Minimalist
**A Morning with the
Black-Winged Stilt**

At Kanha Shanti Vanam, the Black-winged Stilt becomes a graceful symbol of biodiversity, ecological balance, conscious living, and a deeper reverence for nature.

By B. RATHINASABAPATHY

In the bustling ecosystem of Kanha Shanti Vanam, where thousands of hearts seek stillness, nature has provided us with a silent preceptor. Clad in a monochrome tuxedo and standing on impossibly slender pink legs, the Black-winged Stilt is the marshland's resident yogi—a creature that teaches us how to find perfect equilibrium even when the ground beneath us is nothing but shifting silt and water.

The Vision of a Sanctuary

It began with a simple yet profound thought from Daaji: to

create seven rainwater-harvesting ponds within Kanha Shanti Vanam. What started as a mission to recharge groundwater has blossomed into a vibrant, living laboratory of biodiversity. These ponds have become a magnet for life, attracting species from all around. Today, these waters are not just recharging the earth; they are nourishing a sanctuary for both terrestrial and aquatic birds. Who knows? If we continue to tend to this balance, Kanha may soon become a permanent migratory home for travelers from across the globe. Among the most graceful of these new residents is the Black-winged Stilt.

The Supermodel of our Wetlands

If nature had a runway, the Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*) would be its undisputed star. Cloaked in a crisp “tuxedo” of jet-black wings and a snowy white body, it sports legs that seem far too long for its delicate frame.

These bubblegum-pink legs are a masterpiece of biological engineering. They allow the Stilt to wade into deeper waters than other shorebirds, reaching hidden delicacies that others simply cannot access. There is a lesson



Photo: ADITHYA DIVAKAR

here in finding our own depth—using our unique traits to navigate spaces where others might falter.

A Familiar Face at Kanha and Beyond

For those walking the paths of Kanha, these elegant waders are now our neighbors. Whether you are observing the quiet ripples of the Kanha North Pond, Nursery Pond, or the expansive serenity of the Sarovar, you are likely to spot them. Their presence extends into the wider landscape of our community, from the lush Chegur wetland to the tranquil waters of Damirapalli. These local water

bodies serve as vital meditation halls for the Stilts, where they live out their lives in perfect harmony with the environment that we have collectively strived to protect.

Why They Love Kanha

- **The Perfect Depth**—Our harvesting ponds offer the ideal shallow edges they need for nesting.
- **A Safe Haven**—The peace and protection within the Shanti Vanam perimeter allow them to forage without the stress of urban noise.

- **Community Spirit**—They are social birds, often seen in groups, mirroring the communal harmony of the seekers at Kanha.

Zen and the Art of Foraging

Watching a Stilt hunt is a lesson in mindfulness. It doesn't rush. It doesn't splash. It moves with a calculated, rhythmic grace, tilting its needle-like beak toward the water with surgical precision. As it picks out tiny aquatic insects, it reminds us of the power of focused intent. In our world of constant noise, the Stilt thrives by being



Photo: ADITHYA DIVAKAR

entirely present in the ripple of the water.

A Parent's Love

While they appear fragile, these birds possess a fierce, protective heart. If a predator wanders too close to their nest, the Stilt performs the broken-wing display. It drops to the ground, fluttering as if injured, to draw the threat away from its chicks. Once the danger is lured far enough away, the bird miraculously takes flight. It is a breathtaking display of selfless courage, showing that strength is often about wit and devotion rather than muscle.

A Final Reflection

Next time you pass the Nursery Pond, look for those long, pink legs and the steady, rhythmic stride. The Black-winged Stilt invites us to slow down and walk through the world with a bit more elegance. As Daaji's vision of the seven ponds continues to mature, let us remember that when we provide the space for nature to heal, it rewards us with beauty, grace, and a reminder of our own interconnectedness.

As we watch the Stilt navigate the deep waters of the Nursery Pond or the wetlands of Chegur, we are reminded of our own journey. Life may often feel like a vast, unpredictable marsh, but, like our feathered neighbor, we too can learn to walk with grace. We don't need a solid floor to stand tall; we only need the balance of a steady heart and the courage to keep moving through the water.



Photo: RAJESH MENON



**“The quieter you become,
the more you can hear.”**

RAM DASS

Beyond the Pill: What Truly Heals

A reflection on a beloved pharmacist whose care, presence, and sincere attention remind us that healing often reaches beyond medicine.

BY ROMA TANDON

Sometimes we come to know a person most vividly not by meeting them directly, but through the energy, kindness, and stories they've left behind.

That has been my experience with Bill, the pharmacist whose role I stepped into as a covering colleague at Santé Integrative Pharmacy. Though I never had the privilege of knowing him personally, his presence was immediate and undeniable—carried forward by patients who spoke his name with gratitude, colleagues who shared memories with deep affection, and even the subtle rhythm of the pharmacy itself, which seemed to hold traces of his warmth.

Three weeks after his tragic car accident—on his sixty-second

birthday—the community remains stunned. The grief is still raw, woven into every conversation, every lingering pause at the counter.

What struck me most was how Bill's way of relating to people reflected the qualities we value in Heartful Communication: attention, warmth, and respect. As Daaji teaches, "every interaction should elevate us," and through the stories I heard, I saw how Bill lived this truth—turning a rushed pharmacy visit into a moment of genuine connection, making patients feel cared for rather than just served.

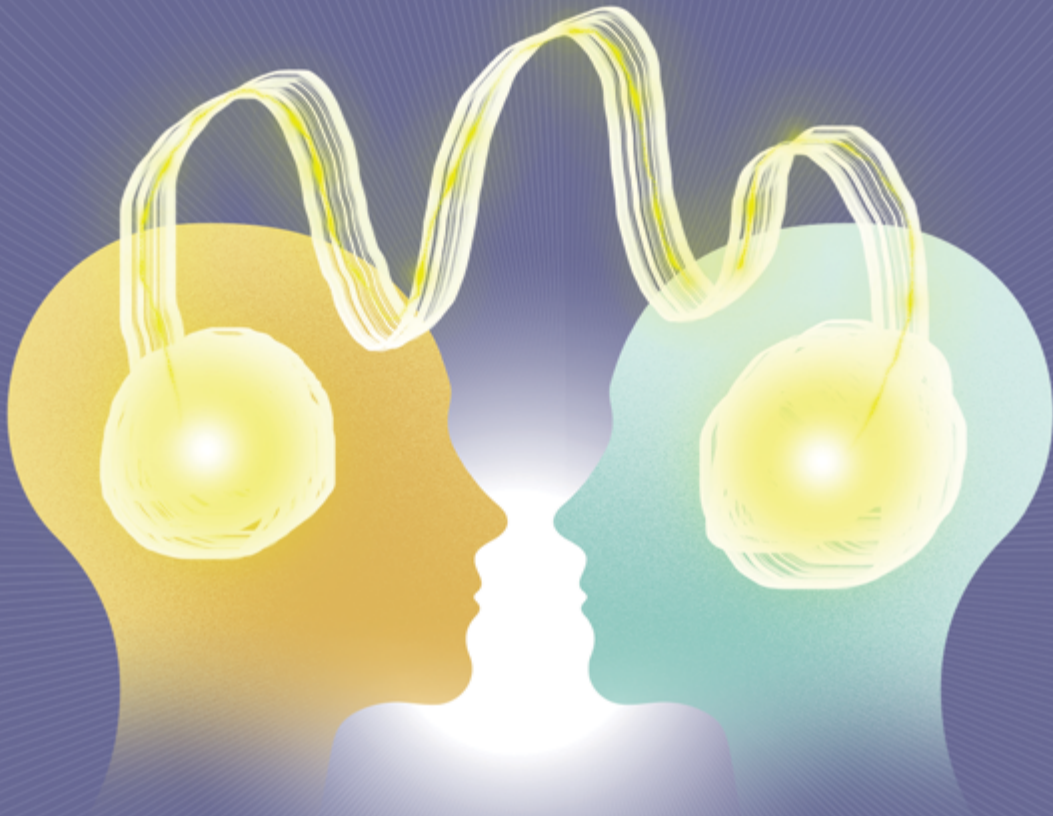
This realization deepened my appreciation for healthcare's sacred nature. Pharmacy is more than dispensing medicine. It

is a place where science meets humanity, where people arrive not only with prescriptions but with worry, uncertainty, and hope. A pharmacist may ease someone's fear simply by listening carefully, answering with patience, and treating them with dignity. Bill seemed to understand this intuitively.

Listening to these stories, I found myself quietly reflecting that, perhaps, the truest way to understand a life like his is simply to listen.

Voices from the Community

"Bill was a blessing to our small Princeton community. His kindness lives on in every life he touched."



Listening to these stories,
I found myself quietly reflecting that,
perhaps, the truest way to understand
a life like his is simply to listen.



“Very sorry to hear about Bill. He was always so kind and attentive whenever I came in. My prayers are with his family.”

“This is heartbreaking news. Bill had a way of making you feel cared for—not rushed, not just another patient, but truly seen.”

“Bill was the best—his attitude, his advice, always helpful. He will be deeply missed.”

“You could feel his warmth the moment you walked in. He listened, he smiled, and somehow made everything feel okay.”

“He knew us not just by our prescriptions, but by our names and our stories. That kind of care is rare.”

Reading these voices, something becomes clear. Bill’s work was not just about dispensing medication. It was about attention, presence, and intention—qualities that brought care and meaning into every interaction.

In Heartful Communication, we often speak about the quality of our attention and awareness. When attention is sincere, it becomes healing in itself. Bill

seemed to embody this effortlessly. His awareness was not divided; it rested fully with the person in front of him.

When my grandmother passed away, I was about ten years old. My father told me, “People die, but their memories don’t.”

Those words echo now, proving true in Bill’s enduring imprint—not in grand achievements, but in the kindness that lingers, the habits of care that others adopt.

This has led me to reflect on how I want to be remembered. Not for expertise alone, but for sincerity—for making others feel heard, valued, and uplifted. If my legacy mirrors Bill’s—woven into hearts through simple acts of elevation—that would be enough.

Bill showed me that Heartful Communication is not something separate from daily life—it is daily life, lived with awareness and love. If every interaction should elevate us, then Bill was already teaching that lesson simply by the way he met people.

I can only hope to carry that lesson forward—in the way I serve, speak, and remember. And in that understanding, I am reminded that what truly heals goes far beyond the pill.

AMERICAN DOHAS

BY CLARK POWELL

I

I looked outside and copied.
I looked inside and found.

II

I walked the roads that others said were true,
wore out my shoes—
then stood, and nothing moved.

III

The river spoke in names I could not know.
I drank the sound and left with the flow.

IV

All that I held has loosened from my hand—
dust knows the shape of everything we planned.

V

I called it loss, and turned away in grief;
time kept the name but quietly dropped the leaf.

VI

No teacher came, no thunder split the sky—
only a breath that did not ask me why.

VII

The house grew still when I gave up the door;
what I had sought was waiting on the floor.

VIII

Which star endures beyond
the mind's brief claim?
Light travels on and never says its name.

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All Knowledge Stems From the Heart



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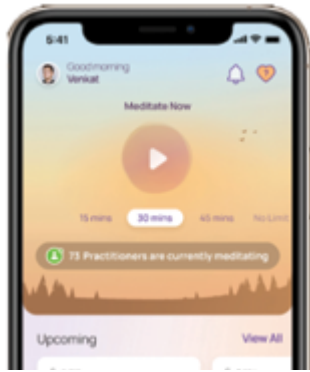
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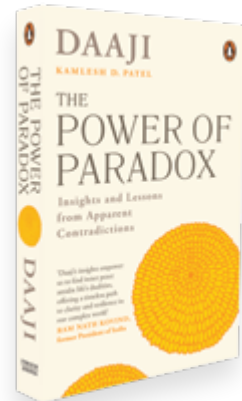


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