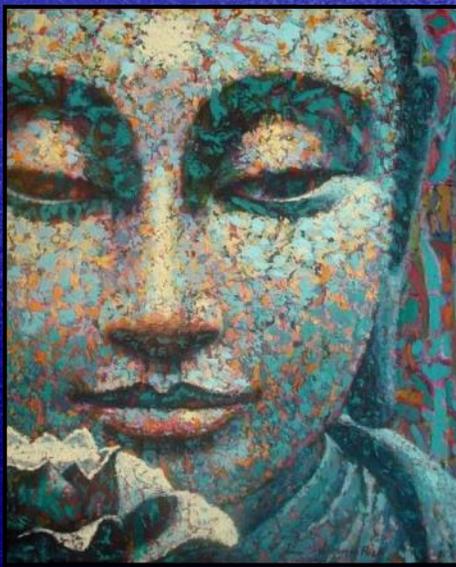


Pathways to Spirit Institute

Centre for Spiritual Development & Growth



Namaste – Newsletter

February 2019

*“In these changing times
the only investment worth
making - is in yourself.”
“The purpose of our lives
is to be happy”*

Dalai Lama



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**“When you truly
realize your worth,
you cannot help
but shine”**

The Fire of Love - A Sufi Path In Islam

By René Wadlow

Do you understand what the Sufi Path in Islam is?

The Fire of Love

*Enough of phrases and conceits and metaphors!
I want burning, burning, become familiar with that!*

*Light up a fire of love in thy soul, burning
Burn all thought and expressions away.*

~Jalal al-Din Rumi

A Sufi Path in Islam

Sufism - mysticism in the Islamic world - has flourished chiefly in Arab countries and in Persia, and later in what is now India and Pakistan. In Persia and the Indian Sub-continent, Sufism built upon earlier pre-Islamic traditions of mystic thought. As Walter Stace noted in his *The Teachings of the Mystics* “The natural drift toward pantheism which is a general feature of mysticism in the West - where the theologians and ecclesiastical authorities try to suppress it and brand it as heresy - is even more pronounced in Sufism than in Christianity - although Muslim orthodoxy disapproves of it quite as emphatically as Christian orthodoxy does. Indeed, the Islamic disapproval may be stronger than the Christian, owing to its more rigid monotheism. After all, no Christian mystic was ever martyred for his pantheistic utterances, whereas this did happen in Baghdad” to Al Hallaj in 922.

Sufism is not one homogenous body of thought or a well-defined set of doctrines and practices. There is considerable internal diversity. However, central to Sufi practice is the role of the spiritual teacher (pir or sheikh) who is believed to have received esoteric wisdom from his own master forming a chain. The role of the teacher has always been to guide the disciple in ways of meditation or other mystical practices often related to breathing so he would acquire spiritual insight through inner experience.

These chains can be considered to be separate spiritual orders. Often the tomb of a Sufi leader becomes a shrine and a pilgrimage site. In Pakistan recently, there have been armed attacks on popular Sufi shrines carried out by more legalistic Muslim groups.

Sufi Spiritual Tradition

Spirituality, in the Sufi tradition, cannot be set apart from life itself, and spiritual development can only be realized through living life to the fullest expression of our potential, using all of our human faculties with the idea of becoming a more complete human being.

In Europe and the USA, one of the best known of the Sufi ‘chains’ is that of an Indian teacher Hazrat Inayat Khan, of the Chishti Sufi Order, named after the Indian town where it had its headquarters who came to the West in 1910 to create a Sufi movement in North America and Europe. He set his headquarters in Geneva, an international city because of the League of Nations. He married Ora Baker, a cousin of Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science. His son Vilayat Inayat Khan succeeded him. In 2000, the grandson Zia Inayat Khan assumed leadership of what has become the Sufi Order International.

Continues page - 2 -

The Fire of Love - A Sufi Path In Islam

In the West, the Islamic base of the teaching is rarely stressed though it is not denied. Most of the members do not come from traditional Muslim families. Here in France where I have had some contacts, most members are not from North Africa which makes up the bulk of the Islamic population but is rather Europeans who are looking for meditation techniques and who could have chosen Tibetan Buddhism had a different opportunity presented itself.

Sufism: Spirituality for Our Times

Pir Vilayat has written on the aims of his work: "I am trying to develop an updated spirituality for our times. I believe that to develop our own being to the highest potential we need to discover our ideal and allow an inborn strength, a conviction in ourselves, to give us the courage toward developing this ideal. This requires both knowing our life purpose and mastery or discipline over ourselves in terms of body, mind, and emotions. With an attitude of joy and enthusiasm, we do not suppress but instead control and direct impulses toward the fulfillment of our goals."

There is a good deal of emphasis placed on "**opening the heart**" and love as love is considered to be an attribute of God. Pir Vilayat wrote "When the light of love has been lit, the heart becomes transparent, so that the intelligence of the soul can see through it; but until the heart is kindled by the flame of love, the intelligence, which is constantly yearning to experience life on the surface, is groping in the dark."

Phillip Gowins has written a useful introduction which outlines exercises linked both to breathing and to creative visualization in meditation. The subtitle of the book is "A Field Guide to the Spiritual Path".(1) However, the emphasis is on the need for a teacher as writings are only of limited help and in working alone one may misjudge one's own progress on the path.

Notes
1) Philip Gowins. Practical Sufism: A Guide to the Spiritual Path. (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 2010, 219pp.)



Namasté

(nah-mas-tay)
**My soul honors your soul.
I honor the place in you where the entire universe resides.
I honor the light, love, truth, beauty and peace within you, because it is also within me.
In sharing these things we are united, we are the same, we are one.**

KEYS TO SERENITY: SERGE MAZERAND CONCERT

KEYS TO SERENITY - A MUSICAL CONVERSATION

Sunday March 31, 2019 at 2.00 PM
Mary Winspear Centre in Sidney, BC
Tickets \$30/person



This is food for your soul! Acclaimed pianist and composer of healing music, award-winning author and inspirational speaker, Serge Mazerand shares with you his soothing music and insights on creating inner peace. On the menu, favourite classical compositions by Chopin, Schubert, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Debussy and more—including Serge's signature arrangement, Clair de Lune, a coming together of Debussy and Beethoven around the Clair de Lune and the Moonlight Sonata Adagio. Serge also enjoys improvising in the moment. You'll emerge from this event, delighted, refreshed and inspired.

This Event is co-hosted by Pathways to Spirit Institute.



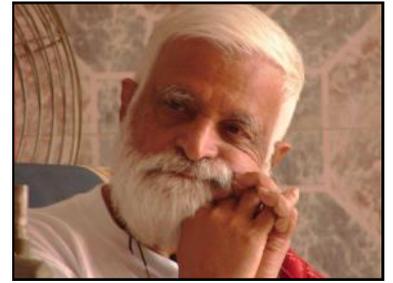
The Key to Abundance
Join us in our monthly Intenders Circle
Check our calendar page at our website for dates:
pathwaystospirit.net



Come, step back...

By H. Spencer Lewis

"Come, step back from your close view of the obstacles that seem to surround you. Close your eyes to them for a while and create a new picture. Leave the past and the present out of your consideration and make a new life, a new day, beginning with tomorrow. Build it up part by part in your mind and in your conversations and contacts with those around you until you have a perfect picture of the future that is just beyond today's horizon. Then step forward bravely into this picture; and with determination start your journey along the line that leads to your new life. You will find yourself master of the picture and of those realities, and you will find in it the greatest happiness and rewards, and every effort, every thought devoted to it."



*"There is no you, no me.
We are one.
That is the truth.
Love brings people together.
So respect love.
Do not degrade it with anger,
violence or lust.
Love is worship."*

*~ Sri Amritananda Natha
Saraswati ("called Guruji"),
he was Devi Parvati's Teacher.*

Dealing With Grief

By Lisa Shaw

Dealing with Sorrow – Grieving in Pieces

When we mourn, and we do so only because we love; the dimensions of that grief differ for each death without one being greater or lesser than another; we grieve from different parts of our heart for different reasons.

The heart is not a cliché. People experiencing grief can distinguish its impact from momentary sadness. True sorrow brings with it a physical tension gnaws at us from the heart center. At various times of day when different sensations trigger memories, none of them are predictable. We experience an emotional pain with an identifiable physical center.

Those who have lost loved ones be they human or animal, consider them and recognize the different pallets of grief you carry.

Just as we don't love each person or animal in our lives the same way, we don't grieve for them from the same place. That doesn't mean we grieve in different measure; we grieve from different places, regardless of how long we've been in a relationship or how challenging that relationship may have been. One parent may have carried us through our early years with great devotion, only to succumb in mid-life to financial strains and workloads that put us at a greater distance. Alternatively, our living demands may have moved us farther away physically and correspondingly emotionally. The fact that we were needier in our earlier years, the love and therefore the grief we experience for our parents emanates from a more primal place. Was it dad who taught you to fly a kite or a ride a two-wheeler? Did Mom take you clothes shopping and make festive birthday parties when you were four, five, six? The grief we feel in parental loss will sweep us back to those images; their love resides in the oldest and most formative places in the part of our consciousness. Grief over parents, grandparents, and siblings can be framed in flickering sequences of childhood images, much like an early 20th century silent film. Here we are at Christmas. Here we are at the beach. Here we are at graduation. If we were blessed enough to be present at the passing of a loved one, we might retain images and sensations of their last breath, their last word, their last gesture, squeezing our hand in the final moments of life. They seem to erupt unannounced as we progress through our mundane days.

Some losses, particularly those of our animal companions, they equate to the loss of a cherished best friend or partner. The grief over the death of the stalwart, elderly faithful dog or cat flows from a deep and serious center. We were both protectors and protected, a role we did not play with our parents. The loss of a rescue dog is a sorrow connected to the loss of a sweet child seeking refuge. We wrapped them in the blanket of our love, and now they're gone; now our hands are empty. As humans, we find discomfort in voids.

Moreover, grief over the loss of a child? This is the unspeakable grief. It may be the hole in our center that never fills.

Although we experience different forms of grief from different origins, each is in some way the same as the next. We have to plow through it (but we never "get over" it) It would be easier if we were not such emotionally driven beings. However, there are lessons and opportunities for us in the loss of those we love. We don't always understand them until much later.



The Joy of Being a Woman in Her 70s

By Mary Pipher

Many of us have learned that happiness is a skill and a choice.

When I told my friends I was writing a book on older women like us, they immediately protested, "I am not old." What they meant was that they didn't act or feel like the cultural stereotypes of women their age. Old meant bossy, useless, unhappy and in the way. Our country's ideas about old women are so toxic that almost no one, no matter her age, will admit she is old.

In America, ageism is a bigger problem for women than aging. Our bodies and our sexuality are devalued, we are denigrated by mother-in-law jokes, and we're rendered invisible in the media. Yet, most of the women I know describe themselves as being in a vibrant and happy life stage. We are resilient and know how to thrive in the margins. Our happiness comes from self-knowledge, emotional intelligence and empathy for others.

Most of us don't miss the male gaze. It came with catcalls, harassment and unwanted attention. Instead, we feel free from the tyranny of worrying about our looks. For the first time since we were 10, we can feel relaxed about our appearance. We can wear yoga tights instead of nylons and blue jeans instead of business suits.

Yet, in this developmental stage, we are confronted by great challenges. We are unlikely to escape great sorrow for long. We all suffer, but not all of us grow. Those of us who grow do so by developing our moral imaginations and expanding our carrying capacities for pain and bliss. In fact, this pendulum between joy and despair is what makes old age catalytic for spiritual and emotional growth.

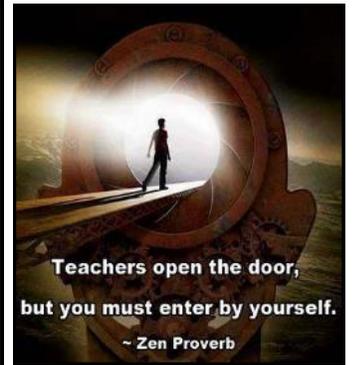
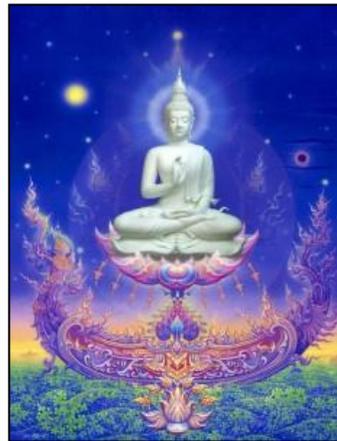
By our 70s, we've had decades to develop resilience. Many of us have learned that happiness is a skill and a choice. We don't need to look at our horoscopes to know how our day will go. We know how to create a good day.

We have learned to look every day for humor, love and beauty. We've acquired an aptitude for appreciating life. Gratitude is not a virtue but a survival skill, and our capacity for it grows with our suffering. That is why it is the least privileged, not the most, who excel in appreciating the smallest of offerings.

Continues page - 5 -

BUDDHA QUOTES THAT WILL PUT YOUR SOUL AT EASE

- ◆ **"The way is not in the sky. The way is in the heart."**
- ◆ **"Every human being is the author of his own health or disease."**
- ◆ **"No one saves us but ourselves. No one can and no one may. We ourselves must walk the path."**
- ◆ **"In the sky, there is no distinction of east and west; people create distinctions out of their own minds and then believe them to be true."**
- ◆ **"There has to be evil so that good can prove its purity above it."**
- ◆ **"It is easy to see the faults of others, but difficult to see once own faults. One shows the faults of others like chaff winnowed in the wind, but one conceals one's own faults as a cunning gambler conceals his dice."**
- ◆ **"We are shaped by our thoughts; we become what we think. When the mind is pure, joy follows like a shadow that never leaves."**
- ◆ **"Work out your own salvation. Do not depend on others."**



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The Hierarchy of Light
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Dragon Magick
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Chakra Balancing
Crystal Healing
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Special Services:
*Emotional Cord Cutting
House Clearings*

As you start to walk out on the way, the way appears.
Rumi

The Joy of Being a Woman in Her 70s

Many women flourish as we learn how to make everything workable. Yes, everything. As we walk out of a friend's funeral, we can smell wood smoke in the air and taste snowflakes on our tongues.

Our happiness is built by attitude and intention. Attitude is not everything, but it's almost everything. I visited the jazz great Jane Jarvis when she was old, crippled and living in a tiny apartment with a window facing a brick wall. I asked if she was happy and she replied, "I have everything I need to be happy right between my ears."

We may not have control, but we have choices. With intention and focused attention, we can always find a forward path. We discover what we are looking for. If we look for evidence of love in the universe, we will find it. If we seek beauty, it will spill into our lives any moment we wish. If we search for events to appreciate, we discover them to be abundant.

There is an amazing calculus in old age. As much is taken away, we find more to love and appreciate. We experience bliss on a regular basis. As one friend said: "When I was young I needed sexual ecstasy or a hike to the top of a mountain to experience bliss. Now I can feel it when I look at a caterpillar on my garden path."

Older women have learned the importance of reasonable expectations. We know that all our desires will not be fulfilled, that the world isn't organized around pleasing us and that others, especially our children, are not waiting for our opinions and judgments. We know that the joys and sorrows of life are as mixed together as salt and water in the sea. We don't expect perfection or even relief from suffering. A good book, a piece of homemade pie or a call from a friend can make us happy. As my aunt Grace, who lived in the Ozarks, put it, "I get what I want, but I know what to want."

We can be kinder to ourselves as well as more honest and authentic. Our people-pleasing selves soften their voices and our true selves speak more loudly and more often. We don't need to pretend to ourselves and others that we don't have needs. We can say no to anything we don't want to do. We can listen to our hearts and act in our own best interest. We are less angst-filled and more content, less driven and more able to live in the moment with all its lovely possibilities.

Many of us have a shelterbelt of good friends and long-term partners. There is a sweetness to 50-year-old friendships and marriages that can't be described in language. We know each other's vulnerabilities, flaws and gifts; we've had our battles royal and yet are grateful to be together. A word or a look can signal so much meaning. Lucky women are connected to a rich web of women friends. Those friends can be our emotional health insurance policies.

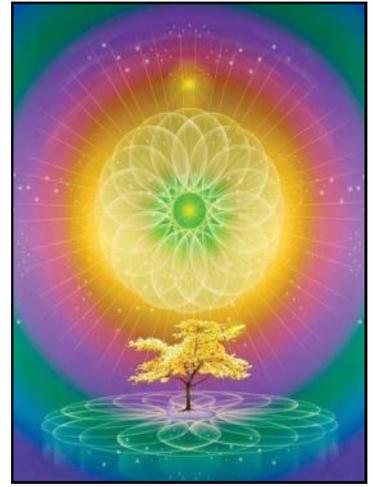
The only constant in our lives is change. But if we are growing in wisdom and empathy, we can take the long view. We've lived through seven decades of our country's history, from Truman to Trump. I knew my great-grandmother, and if I live long enough, will meet my great-grandchildren. I will have known seven generations of family. I see where I belong in a long line of Scotch-Irish ancestors. I am alive today only because thousands of generations of resilient homo sapiens managed to procreate and raise their children. I come from, we all come from, resilient stock, or we wouldn't be here.

By the time we are 70, we have all had more tragedy and more bliss in our lives than we could have foreseen. If we are wise, we realize that we are but one drop in the great river we call life and that it has been a miracle and a privilege to be alive.

The Author:

Mary Pipher is a clinical psychologist in Lincoln, Neb., and the author of the forthcoming "Women Rowing North: Navigating Life's Currents and Flourishing as We Age."

Devi and Dietmar Dombkowski are healers, metaphysical teachers & spiritual guides in the ancient Mystery School tradition. They have received special training and empowerments and teach classes and workshops sharing the ancient wisdom of the Mystery Schools which dates back to the earliest spiritual knowledge of this planet and beyond.



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FREE HALF HOUR CONSULTATION

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