

The background of the cover is a photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, there is a flat, sandy desert floor with some sparse, low-lying vegetation. In the middle ground, a large, prominent rock formation rises, characterized by distinct horizontal layers or strata. The sky above is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

JOURNEYS AND AWAKENINGS

WISDOM FOR SPIRITUAL TRAVELERS

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Introduction

Robert Peretz Corman

Journeys and Awakenings: Wisdom for Spiritual Travelers calls for the recovery of our forgotten “perennial wisdom”—not as an end in and of itself, but rather as a fresh foundation for leaning into the possibilities of a bright future for the generations to come. Its contributors, enriched with splendidly diverse experiences, hail from cultures and ecosystems that robe the planet. With great heart and dedication to life-long learning, they have generously offered their inspirations and insights to us all.

This remarkable home we call Earth, blessed with a diversity of life-forms in partnership with all the elements, is a realm for wonderment and mystery. Insights into the way of the world and our life in it are at the heart of our personal and collective journey. Throughout the ages, women and men everywhere have longed to understand how we are tied to the whole of things and how we are, perhaps, a distinct presence in the vast flow of time. In moments when we experience an exquisite alignment with the fullness of all that is, we gradually open to the almighty realm of the unknowable, and, somehow, we do not feel at all lost. In fact, it feels like we have come home. The sweetness of this connection is truly divine.

For a scientist, this great “aha!” moment is the kissing cousin of the great “aha!” moment of the mystic. And they have good company on this path of uplifting discovery, for today we have at hand an ever-brightening treasure of stories and letters, drawings and sculptures, songs, symphonies and dances in celebration of these very moments and the insights drawn from them. They all honor the mystery and Source of Life itself. They raise new questions, perhaps, more than answer old ones; yet in the asking is a kind of trusting that the great mystery will lift its veil and reveal still more.

Through all this interplay there grows an ongoing self-discovery, a veritable liaison with the transcendent, and an aliveness that allows us to rest in the awareness that the riches of our human potential are truly within reach. Today we are blessed with the treasury of many mystical traditions evolved from the rare beauty of these experiences. Personal and communal practices have been received, taught and preserved in settings ranging from the elegantly simple to soaring architectural structures, all to honor the ineffable wonder of it all. While different languages, contrasting rituals, and diverse cosmological framings mark the distinct brilliance of each one, they surely are of a piece.

The writings within this book offer direct evidence of the common ground trod by spiritual travelers writing of their journey. The salience in the modern world of each of the articles is not at all limited to appreciating the author’s individual experience, but more to bolster the collective stake humanity has in such shared experiences. If the words of this book could manifest as an ode, a dance, or a soaring song, it would deliver a clarion call for readers to know that when they attune to their own distinctive yet inextricable link to all of life, it is not only their birthright and a blessing upon them, it actually feeds and sustains the conditions for right action longed for and needed across the world.

To be able to engage the world with inner peace and clarity is a profound accomplishment. In the eloquent words of Pir Zia Inayat-Khan, one wise way is presented:

*We are all fellow travelers.
All pilgrims together
emerging from mystery
and returning to it.*

*What if, when we gather,
we gather in the light of
this awareness –
that we are wayfarers
sharing stories of our journey,
knowing that our destination
lies in mystery.*

The aggregate message drawn from the contributions in the book before you has lustre and fullness because they so broadly represent the human experience. Each contributor has passionately and deliberately plumbed the depths of their chosen work in the world and illumined distinctive lessons for us. While the writers seem quite disparate, there is a pattern that connects the inner city art therapist to the astrophysicist, the primatologist to the former president of an Asian nation, the musician to the social entrepreneur, the zealous atheist to the spiritual guide. Each engages their work in contemporary society much like those wayfarers Pir Zia speaks of above.

Together, the various contributions suggest ways to re-imagine a more peaceful planetary culture. We could start with the very personal, the value of self-discovery through music, song and dance as found in the rich offerings of Yuval Ron's *Sacred Ecstasy* and Robin Becker's *Belonging to Life*. Other titles begin with the cosmos, like W.H.S. Gebel's *Does the Universe Have an Inner Life?* or Omid Safi's *Heaven is Not a Zipcode*, but even these circle right back to the individual as the doorway to these seemingly distant realms, just as Ron and Becker discover the cosmos by going within.

Wherever we look, there is a reaching for the wholeness of life, for an experience beyond duality. Consider the lessons shared in the very personal stories from Wendy Jehanara Tremayne's *When the Whole World Is For Sale*, or Deepa Gulrukh Patel's *Journaling the Journey*. From the street-level viewpoint, Adam Bucko's *My God Is in the Street* and Denise Boston's *Expressive Arts Therapy* reveal the immediate, one-on-one call to serve those in need as they try to clear life hurdles to reach for their fullest place in the world.

Other essayists speak about their awakening to a vision of personal spiritual purpose that includes insights into how to actually embody that vision. Consider the soaring language of Christina Solaris's *From Vision to Action*:

*When we awaken to the divine within us, we begin to have visions of what may be possible.
We begin to have flashes of a healed Earth and a loving world. We have insights into how we
can re-imagine old decaying systems and traditions in new life-giving ways. We begin to see
how to become instruments of the highest good of all.*

The awakenings shared in these pages may well move the reader to deepen their sense of a personal calling. Indeed, the stunning ecological message heard in the voice of Diana Beresford-Kroeger in her interview with

Gary Null entitled *The Mystery of Trees* beautifully joins the sacred practical with the universal unity of things while invoking a call to action. Llewellyn Vaughn-Lee speaks directly to the next generation as he shares his journey in *Spiritual Principles in Action*.

Richly woven through the fabric of the book are writings about the grand template that hosts the flow of all human exploration, and our history across cultures and traditions. How can the living wisdom at the heart of human knowing and sharing be harvested for the broadest common good? William Irwin Thompson's *The End of the Age of Religion and the Birth of Symbiotic Consciousness* offers a dynamic retrospective on the brilliant insights of many wise thinkers and leaders as they pondered the evolution of human spirituality and planetary culture, and hints at the danger of not taking action.

Finally, interspersed across these chapters, we are granted entrée to a set of letters exchanged between mystics David Spangler, William Irwin Thompson and Pir Zia Inayat-Khan. This conversation was initiated by an inquiry from William Irwin Thompson to Pir Zia about the importance of the role the Sufis played in bringing forward the Renaissance and the role they might play on the troubled world stage today. Responding to the historical references in Thompson's letter, Pir Zia advances the conversation with numerous fascinating citations. He then refers to two distinctive contributions made by both Thompson and David Spangler, each of which could be seen as "harbingers of an integrated world view." In this most worthy dialogue, *On Prophecy and Time*, ten separate episodes reveal how these splendid teachers explore and appreciate the language and framings of each other's understandings. Follow the thread of this remarkable exchange to see where they go.

The personal journeys and awakenings of the contributors resonate with the teachers, role models, and mentors who inspired each of them along their varied paths, fueling them, in turn, to inspire you, the reader. This is a well-trod path across every tradition, rooted in the understanding, as Chief Arvol Looking Horse reminds us in *A Great Urgency*, "that what we create can have lasting effects on all life."

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Belonging to Life

A Reflection on Movement and Meditation

Robin Becker

Throughout my life I have been drawn to contemplation, meditation and movement. As a child, my love of movement carried me into the world of dance, where I have developed and worked as a dancer and choreographer for many decades. If you had met me as a five year old child, and asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I would have responded with full confidence that I planned on being a dancer and a nurse. I never became a nurse. However, a fundamental interest in healing, and serving the larger world

shaped and guided my journey over the years. I also learned to love the natural world, and the animal world from my parents who were both from farming families. I continue to believe that this connection to nature has served as a foundation for the somatic inquiries in which I have been engaged.

Despite the many gifts of my childhood, another powerful shaping force in my life was paradoxically the feeling that I really didn't belong anywhere. I was a highly sensitive child who felt and expressed emotions deeply. I grew up with loving and well-meaning parents that did not have the emotional resources to respond to the depth of my feeling. The result of not being met emotionally was that I struggled with feeling abandoned and unrecognized. I spent many hours in an interior world of imagination, realms of light, prayer, and long conversations with the understanding community of stuffed animals on my bed. For years, I felt great secret anguish behind my very accomplished, public, outgoing persona.

I now value the wisdom of that child and her early choices. I see how my interior struggle was a guiding force for future learning. I eventually found my way into different therapy situations, and I have continued a life-long interest in the field of psychology. I met the teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan, and the Sufi Order of the West [now the Inayati Order - ed.], where I felt an attunement to the perspectives and philosophy of that mystical path. I also had the blessing twenty-five years ago of meeting Emilie Conrad, founder of the somatic practice Continuum Movement. Continuum forever changed my understanding of embodiment, movement, and how we all intimately belong to life.

I am sharing a small part of my personal story to begin this reflection, because the silent worlds of movement and meditation are subjectively experienced. What follows is an offering from my experience.

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When I began meditation, I considered it to be a refuge of complete stillness and release of thought: a place of rest where we would allow our spirit to leave the prison of our bodies and flow freely into higher realms of light and consciousness. I had many moments in my youthful meditating life when I wished I could just let go of the struggle of this physical life, and solely live in the magnificent realms of light I experienced. My problem was that I also loved the joy and physicality of dancing where I felt myself in total communion with the music. This was a passion that propelled my life, and I believe it often saved my life. I felt totally empowered when I was dancing. I considered the movement of my body to be an external activity that I was in absolute control of directing: such as the combinations of steps I did as a dancer, walking across the floor, stretching, lifting an object, or standing up and sitting down. That mastery was an important resource of self-confidence and identity in my early years.

As the years went by, I began to wonder how I could bring these two worlds together. I wondered how my dancing could reflect the realms of light and beauty I experienced in meditation. In meditation, I began to wonder how my body could go with me into those expanded states of consciousness. It was through meeting the somatic practice of Continuum Movement, that I began to learn my way into these questions.

Continuum offers a completely different understanding of the body than what Western Culture believes a body to be. It was world changing for me to consider that the body is an expression of an ancient unfolding planetary process, comprised of approximately 70% water that is in constant motion, instead of a solid stable form. I learned that water is liquid crystalline. Every cell in the body is made of this sensitive pulsing substance capable of receiving and transmitting information. Core teachings from many wisdom traditions, and the scientific world all emphasize that life is a process of constant change. I resonated with that idea, but I never

fully grasped its significance. I needed the experience of life as movement for that truth to metabolize and grow within me.

When I speak of movement now, I am speaking about a primary movement of life. Most of us understand that any living system needs water to survive. However, we often overlook the fact that the movement of water itself has shaped all life forms: from our development in the fluid environment of our mother's womb, to the arcing shapes of trees, meandering rivers, curved stones, unfurling plants, and the wavelike landscape of mountains. Western culture tends to emphasize static form and facts. The perspective of Continuum is that all form is the result of movement. The entire living universe is a process of fluid movement.

An important principle of fluid systems is that they function in resonance or immediate communication with all other fluid systems. A characteristic of fluid movement is that it is radiant, spreading out and connecting, as rivers move toward the sea. My blood, my tears, my breath and my pulsing organs are in a dynamic exchange with all other living processes. As I have developed greater awareness of the sensory communication of my body, I have learned a new story of how I deeply belong to life. As an integral part of the fabric of life, I now understand my body as a portal to the larger universe from which I am not separate, and to which I deeply and intimately belong. The angst of my early childhood story began to shift as I experienced the ever-present touch and response of the living universe.

With the perspective of all life as moving vibration, we can explore a continuum of consciousness from the physical world into the subtle movements, textures and vibrations of the invisible world. Conceptually, it was much easier for me in my early years to accept the idea of spirit and energy moving into form, rather than to accept that we might also follow the path from the denser more visible configurations of our bodies to the finer realms of energy and vibration. I have learned a new reverence for my body and its miraculous intelligence and capacity to serve multiple functions as I have explored a path of conscious embodiment. I have come to consider my entire being, including my thinking capacity, to be a sensitive, intelligent, perceiving world of movement intimately and dynamically engaged with the larger universe.

Movement and meditation are practices in which we make ourselves available to life as it unfolds in the present moment. We enter a much broader field of engagement than the limits of thought and personal preferences. Both contemplative inquiries are creative endeavors that require courage, discipline, and a radical choice to be with the tempo of a process that moves much slower than the acceleration of our culture. We step outside the familiar context of daily life in order to gain a deeper and expanded view of our lives where we may encounter what is unfamiliar and unexpected. We have the opportunity to re-familiarize ourselves with the subtle textures and sensory language of the natural world, which is the first language we mastered as infants. Impulses of new and unexpected forms may begin to move into our awareness through sensations, feelings, intuition, or inspirations of new possibilities for our lives.

The perspective of the body's role as an essential aspect of our intelligence is not always held as a value in western culture. Many people find it difficult to engage in somatic practices. It is much easier to engage in physical activities that have external goals to achieve or skills to master: activities in which we feel in control and capable of directing all actions. After years of exploring movement, I have come to think of the body as a living library of a person's entire lifetime. The highly sensitive, responsive capability of liquid crystalline substance within us carries the memories and imprint of all our experiences. It is inevitable if we embark upon the path of embodied inquiry, that we will need resources in order to meet what emerges from within. I have found that many people are frightened of movement practices, as so many memories of pain and struggle reside in the body. The body becomes a landscape of fear instead of possibility.

As infants, we felt things throughout our entire bodies. If we were hungry, our entire body would cry out in distress. There was not the differentiation or development of consciousness to know that we were hungry and that our caregiver would be there in the near future to feed us. Every cell in our infant body would express the total global distress of the moment. There is not a developed sense of self in an infant. All conscious relationship requires a level of differentiation in order for the space of relationship to be possible. The extraordinary gift of our human consciousness is that we have the opportunity to be self-aware and in relationship with ourselves. The hyper-sensitive and brilliant awareness of the infant still exists within our adult bodies. As we grow in awareness of our embodiment, we gain the differentiated ground and spaciousness needed to be in relationship with that core sensitivity. We can learn how to encompass and value our vulnerability as an attribute rather than a weakness. I have found this journey of exploring movement and meditation to be a path in which I have grown in compassion for both myself and the larger world.

As a dancer, I have learned that if I want to leap into the air, I must first lower myself to the earth in order to gather my strength to push off the earth and rise up into the air. To rise up, I need ground. The two directions are in relationship with each other. I see the partnership of contemplative movement inquiry and meditation in a similar way: as we cultivate more sensory awareness, it is as if we grow a bigger container and broader field through which to receive and engage expanded dimensions of life. A larger sensation-body supports us in meeting the more subtle realms of consciousness.

The practice of movement and meditation is an unfolding path of discovery. We are never abandoned by the movement of life. To perceive all existence as movement is a very hopeful endeavor, as new possibilities endlessly emerge. The richness of what we are privileged to experience in life is boundless.....

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Wisdom and the Way of Self-Awakening

Lee Irwin

The topic of Wisdom is a deep and difficult subject because, as a limited human being, the scope and depth of Wisdom exceeds my grasp. I cannot start from a position of authority because Wisdom, whom I will personify as feminine, knowing she is so much more, cannot be contained by the authority of any personality or subjective state. For me, Wisdom is a Mystery inseparable from the sacred ground of Being from which we all come and in which we live and breathe and co-exist.

I am reminded of an image from the ancient Egyptian world, a larger-than-life-sized statue of the Goddess Isis, carved from black stone. She sits on a throne, veiled, with the Ankh (symbol of life) in one hand and flowers (symbols of luminous beauty) in the other. On the front of the base is carved the following saying: “I am everything that was, everything that is, that will be, and no mortal has yet dared to lift my veil.” Isis as an image of the Goddess of Wisdom, of innumerable attributes inscribed in the Isis aretalogies, reflects the Mystery of the Veil that hangs between seeing and being seen, a translucent barrier that reminds us of our mortality and limitations. Wisdom, in the image of the veiled goddess, solicits our sense of awe and reverence before the unspeakable depth of divine origins. As it is written in The Wisdom of Solomon (7:10-26): “Her radiance is unceasing.” . . . “She penetrates and permeates all spirits, all things” for “She is the breath of the power of God, a spotless mirror of divine activity.”

The human circumstance, embodied in the circumscriptions of sensory, emotional, and intellectual perception, holds a revelatory potential. The depths of the sacred human are, I believe, inseparable from the divine ground in which Wisdom sustains our capacity for new insights, creative manifestations, and a lucid maturity of care and concern for the well being of others. In this sense, I perceive Wisdom as a nurturing presence, a veiled potential able to illumine any circumstance, relative condition, or situation. She is discovered in the moment of inspiration, in the outward flowing energies of love that manifest as a concern for the health and vitality of another, in the joy of discovery, and in the affirmation of what is truly sacred in life.

We grow into Wisdom, into a maturity of insight that challenges us to constantly refine and deepen our understanding and values. And each step is part of a dance, a partnership with all those we encounter, to find the appropriate response that will manifest the potential of Wisdom in each and every circumstance. Wisdom is not a content, nor a set of precepts or rules for behavior, nor is it a particular philosophy or coded symbolism of a spiritual practice. Wisdom is a process, a dynamic interaction that penetrates every person and being, every creature and created thing which seeks to solicit insight; it is unconfined in static images, irreducible to fixed ideas.

It is my conviction that Wisdom in its depthless Mystery is emergent, revelatory, and infinitely capable of newness [in the context of the preservation and enhancement of life]. Whatever content we attribute to Wisdom, however viable and central to human life, such content reflects only the interface between our shared mortalities and the conditionality of the human situation. Our relative needs for greater maturity or insight depend on the development and refinement of the known in the face of the unknown. Beyond the content, or through the content, the Mystery of the depthless wonder of human possibility, of creative discovery, manifests the heart of Creation [— to make a world, beings, the web of life —] as living, dynamic, and evolving toward deeper insights and the embodiment of sacred potential.

Wisdom as an emergent ground, as a dynamic process of discovery and affirmation, is deeply rooted in the pathways of mystical tradition, in the branching Tree of human spiritual realizations and embodiments. The roots of this Tree sink deep into the sacred ground, drawing sustenance from every tradition that hallows life, nurtures human relations, and promotes communication and understanding between and across traditions. Every tradition embodies wisdom in the life of its community, in our human capacities to actually manifest wisdom in our interactions with others. And out of those interactions comes yet more revelatory insights because? Wisdom is not bound by human law or custom or tradition.

Wisdom, as an ever deepening current within the World Soul, I believe offers all humanity the opportunity to be fully participant in the forthcoming of new insights and revelations. These insights, arising through all

the branches of human activity—artistic, musical, mathematical, scientific, political or economic—reflect the self-surpassing nature of our human potential. We are not defined by what was but stand, as individuals and as communities, on the threshold of what might become, what calls us beyond our limits into an expansive horizon of shared insights, new spiritual realizations, and the reaffirmation of the sacredness of creation.

As a global community, we bear a responsibility to foster the health and well-being of all humanity, and through Wisdom to find the ways that lead to peace and cooperation. The very ground of Wisdom manifests in the energies and creative interactions of those who can love and be loved, where love is the medium of Wisdom, and creative trust and cooperation are the weft upon which is woven the imagery of our greatest accomplishments. And every act of selfish concern, every violent reaction and self-serving decision, unravels that imagery and leaves only the disjointed remnants, the disturbing incongruity of uncaring beings in pursuit of their own pleasures, needs and appetites.

Chivalry, in a spiritual sense, is caring for others, protecting the weak and less empowered, and serving a cause greater than one's own needs and aspirations. Wisdom requires chivalry, a surrender of pride in knowing, deep humility, a willingness to not know, not see, not comprehend. Then the loving heart can be informed, in service and devotion, by what next is needed, inspired by insight, for the healing of our many wounds and scars, for the recovery of our dignity in light of our renewed potential for transformation.

We do not need teachers of Wisdom; what we need is a shared context within which the processes of inspiration can be fostered for the good of all, not the few. We must all seek to be wise, however simple that wisdom might be. In the deep Mystery of Wisdom, we are asked, led, persuaded to be more, to prepare our hearts for a lifting of the Veil that we might receive inspiration, guidance, direction that demands our utmost creative abilities to actualize. Wisdom does not give us “answers”—She teaches us through the gifts of our own potential, reveals a resolution based on the integrity by which we live, by the honesty and truthfulness between our thoughts, words, deeds and promises.

The importance of integrity is crucial—every seeker of Wisdom takes on the burden of living in accordance with his or her most profound insights. It is not only the teachings, but the practices, and even more, the embodiment that manifests the values and commitments of the individual, that reveals the deep congruency between thought, feeling, will and creative actions. As Wisdom flows into our lives, every person becomes an embodiment of sacred potential, every individual a medium of possible insight. The clarity, depth and fullness of that insight arises through an inner coherency, a healthy-mindedness, a loving heart, and a flexible will that seeks to foster growth and development in both self and others.

We are all teachers of Wisdom through the acts and commitments of our lives. We must awaken our deep potential through the inner sacrifice of selfish intent and the surrender of unconcern for the well being of others. Wisdom asks us to recognize our limits, to acknowledge our lack of insight, and to affirm our desire to be uplifted through a gracious receptivity of the Infinite. Within nurturing Presence, our stance or attitudes toward our unknown potential is a crucial index of our capacity for growth. As I give myself to Wisdom, She gives Herself to me, the greater giving to the lesser for purposes of shared human development.

There is a mystical ground within Wisdom, an ocean of endless reach without a shore, a vast clarity whose light is a source of quickening life, a profound energy of creation. And we, as limited beings, stand in the midst of that Ocean, surrounded by the currents of transformation, breathing our life gift for the purposes of creation. And the self in that context goes beyond “identity” and becomes something else, it becomes a gate, a mirror, a window through which the light of transformation can reach the incarnate world, cast its rays on sorrow and suffering, and offer healing warmth.

Can we clean the glass? Can we remove the smoky darkness of inner preoccupations, the ashes of hurt and the dust of illusion cast by our poor choices and misdirection? Can we polish the mirror of the heart and make a place within our engaged and active lives for unexpected revelation? Can we hold open through love and care, an inner expectation, a purity of motive seeking new insights without preconception?

The awakening of self-awareness is the very basis of spiritual insight because the ground of our humanity is not different than the ground of Wisdom. What we desire for the well being of the world, without imposition or arrogance, without fear or qualification, is born through self like a lens polished to focus light, to spark the fire of inspiration. Wisdom's light teaches us not to abandon self but to perfect the self as a medium of engagement within the world; Her light is a subtle vitality that heals excess and extremes and encourages the grafting of individual insights onto the Tree of Life.

Wisdom teaches engagement, dedication, loving kindness, and the joy and humor of our limitations. Whatever we know, there is more—immeasurably More—and the excitement of that fact is that there is no end to creative discovery and world transformation.

*May Wisdom guide our steps, may we find the courage
to surrender and in our willingness to learn,
discover Her Endless Depths.
May we rejoice in the fellowship of Wisdom, in related
harmonies of soul and loving embrace,
affirming Her Luminous Presence.
May we overcome the illusions of self through courage
and thus discover the self-in-relation,
manifesting Her Joyful Grace.
And may we work in concert, in solidarity to discover
our differences, each unique, rare and precious,
as a witness to Her Unity and Diversity.
Amen, Now and Always.*

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From Vision to Action

How We Can Fulfill Our Call to Higher Service

Christina Solaris

God: Please Use Me. Let me be an Instrument. Let my Life be for Something. Reveal my purpose to me!

I was down on my knees, uttering one of the deepest, most treasured prayers of the human soul. And I refused to get up until I had an answer.

You see, I was on a quest:

We are born with a great sense that our lives are for something **BIG**, something important, something greater than ourselves. Something of significance, a part of some effort or some saving grace that will be a benefit to the whole.

Because if we aren't meant for something big, then what on earth is this whole journey of life for?

The world's scriptures tell us that we are made in the image and likeness of our innermost essence, which is Spirit. We are forged by the Supreme Being at the center of all things. Because we are made in the image and essence of the Ultimate, at the deepest level we share its divine characteristics. We can therefore emanate expanded consciousness, deep unending love, grace, mercy and a profound devotion to all of creation.

When we awaken to the divinity within us, we begin to have visions of what may be possible. We begin to have flashes of a healed Earth and a loving world. We have insights into how we can re-imagine old decaying systems and traditions in new life-giving ways. We begin to see how to become instruments of the highest good of all. We know that the old ways of doing can be remade to convey higher consciousness. We have visions of creating a World that Works for Everyone, including the Earth herself! This urge to be part of the great solution is nothing less than our innermost divine essence yearning to express itself. It is a fundamental urge of the divine to express its Light, Love and Life outwardly. [We wish to acknowledge the profound work of Howard Wills, who developed a contemporary language of prayer in the continuum of Infinite Light, Love and Life.]

That fateful day, after hours of prayer on my knees, I finally received a vision. It was a clarion call to my highest destiny. I was shown a path that I would not have dared to imagine for myself. A life more wonderful, a vision more vast, a service more meaningful, a relationship more fulfilling, than I had ever dreamed of before. Wow!

Even as I proclaimed, "Yes! Yes! Yes!" to the divine in that small meditation room, my mind chimed in with the question: How on earth is this going to be possible!? You see, the vision I received was so far removed from my small-feeling life at the time that I could not wrap my head around how it would become a reality. It was so vast and beautiful, and I had no idea how it would be possible.

So this became my next prayer: Spirit, I say Yes! to this vision, but please show me How!

We may have great visions, but are we truly ready? We may be yearning, but are we fit to fulfill them?

What does it take to go from visualization to actualization?

Is a visionary or enlightened moment enough?

To paraphrase the sage Sri Yukteswar (guru to Paramahansa Yogananda): A single enlightened soul can effect a greater positive change than a thousand humanitarians. And so, the goal of enlightenment has become the most popular prize on the spiritual path. For the last several thousand years, humanity's spiritual journey has focused on enlightenment, awakening, liberation. The ascetic, monastic, celibate traditions of the East and the esoteric Mystery Schools of the West have called humanity higher out of its material morass. As a result, humanity has begun to lift its head from a dull slumbering existence into its higher potential. We have

begun to awaken out of our limited personal identities and are becoming aware that there is a deeper sense of Self.

There is a soul within us which bears profound talents, expertise and new horizons, and it is just waiting to participate fully in our lives. We realize that our divine nature has been waiting for us to come along, honor, participate and claim it. Once we have tasted this nectar of divine meaning, we seek out the teachers, disciplines, and modes of propulsion towards the Supreme Source. We seek to merge with our innermost essence—that from which we have never been separate—Source, Spirit, Omnipresence.

For so long, this remembrance of Divine Union has been the ultimate prize—the reason we have incarnated, the pearl beyond price, the capping reward, God’s golden ticket out of what has been called samsara and back to the God realms, back Home. As a result, transcendence, the upward outward expansive movement into the Ultimate, has been the most desired journey.

But this is only half the story.

Anyone who thinks it is the end ...

Is about to have yet another awakening:

Enlightenment is just the beginning.

Those who have had glimmers of unity consciousness, who have cultivated it, and are establishing themselves in the Supreme, have an inkling that this is just the beginning of a deeper mastery where we not only merge with the infinite but begin to fully function from it. Where we integrate the expanded self into our daily activities. From samadhi in action we are able to serve and make an even greater contribution, because it is now coming from expanded consciousness. As the saying goes: chop wood, carry water.

In truth we have not just incarnated to awaken to our true nature. When we awaken we assimilate more of the qualities of the Divine. Among the qualities of the divine are that it answers prayer without ceasing, dispenses mercy without end, and is continuously working to uplift and evolve itself through creation. When we remember our divine nature, we re-energize these qualities. We begin to act as the divine would act: self-effulgent and overflowing with life force and blessings.

This is the deeper reason why we have incarnated. Not just to awaken, but to become a living, breathing Answer to Prayer. To become a physical manifestation of divine mercy in action answering the Cry of our Souls and the Cry of the World.

And so begins the second phase of this giant journey: Embodiment. In the quest for enlightenment, many of the world’s religious and spiritual traditions left the body and all materiality behind for thousands of years. The body was relegated to worlds of shame, separation, illusion and samsara.

Indeed, the body and all things associated with it (women, wildness, earthiness, darkness) were not just “conveniently left behind.” The Body was repudiated and denigrated (that word is deliberately used here to convey the fullness of its prejudicial intent). It was persecuted. It was guillotined, burned at stake, hung from scaffolds. It was bought and sold as chattel, its natural carnal functions were rendered abominable. Entire empires were raised and toppled on the following of repressive codes of bodily conduct that made all things carnal and fleshly the depth of sin. Finally, it was commodified in the name of profit and exploited as a hollow sketch upon which hauntingly soulless material fantasies could be projected.

This separation between source and the body is a false separation whose purpose has run its course. The pendulum had swung so far towards transcendence, that it has now become its return journey towards embodiment.

When we dare to follow this natural renaissance and reclaim our embodiment, we begin to experience the power of the divine light when it is actualized. We move along a spectrum from Light to Love, and into Life itself, as a force and intelligence which moves every particle on earth in its own mysterious and majestic dance. Shakti. Shekinah. She.

But the reclamation of the body and our embodiment is not a mental exercise. “Visualizing,” “meditating on,” or “praying for” embodiment (which are some of the preferred, known and comfortable methods of transcendental evolution) are akin to a car spinning its wheels while being suspended on a lift at the mechanic. There is no traction with the earth, and it won’t go anywhere.

Embodiment must be invited physically through healing action. We can reclaim the body through dance, movement, drumming, sensuality, bodywork, womb healing, cellular cleansing and detoxification, spinal alignment, fascia release, and so many other ways. This depth of self-healing and self-care is a massive departure of the indoctrinated exploitation of the flesh in the name of progress and profit.

It is for this reason that deep self-care is still a radical and subversive act, and why we must reclaim it regardless of whether others think it is necessary, appropriate, or worth it.

As we do so, we make space for the light, love and life of source within our very own bodies and limbs. We begin to root to the source rising up from the ground of Being that holds us, and we begin to see its blessings made manifest. Our health, security and prosperity improve. And as all of this occurs, we strengthen, renourish, grow, and begin to come into overflow.

Humanity is now in the age of collective awakening and embodiment. It is time to reclaim the Source within, and then to actualize it by grounding to it in our physical beings. Earth. Embodiment. The Final Frontier.

Why is this important? For eons humanity has often chosen service through martyrdom. We have made a difference, yes, but through suffering, self-denial, depletion and self-harm. These are the hallmarks of an era founded upon the transcendental journey of enlightenment, which generated sacred service and fulfillment based on the denial of the body.

This is no longer tenable. We are coming full circle, and as we step into divine embodiment we realize: That in order to fulfill our callings, we must truly be living examples of divinity made manifest, of radiant health, wellness, blessing, and peace. We are called to become examples of what divinity could look like actualized in form. When we cultivate this overflowing embodiment, we grow into a state of being and having “more than enough,” so that we can begin to be a blessing to others too.

This is where our ultimate fulfillment is born: When we have more than enough, we can become a sustainable blessing to others. We graduate from enlightenment to embodied fulfillment. Our souls begin to truly be of great benefit. We can begin to nurture our dreams, visions, and sacred call.

That day on the meditation cushion, a miraculous process began to unfold. When I asked Spirit to show me how these visions could become possible, I was given a series of answers. Over the course of the next weeks, months, and yes, even years, I was given a progressive revelation of the steps towards divine fulfillment. A sort of spiritual “connect the dots” prayer system that links the life we have now, with the life our spirit would choose for us.

A process by which we can Awaken. And then Embody. A full-circle cycle of evolution that guides us through each phase in a way that is utterly unique to our own individuated soul.

It took eight years to internally receive this series of 24 principles or prayers, who bring us full circle to our divine fulfillment. Each and every one of these prayers was so powerful that it took months to integrate. And as I integrated each new prayer, my life utterly transformed.

Within 18 months, my life not only fulfilled the vision I had received on the meditation cushion, but it had surpassed it. And in time my service grew to reach souls on six continents, and I began to share these powerful prayers.

The beauty of this process is that it can be used in virtually any faith context. Whether you invoke the prayers for yourself, or they are adapted for congregations, these powerful principles translate across interfaith lines allowing their blessings to be received in the unique language of our own hearts and souls.

I finally asked Spirit if this series of prayers and principles had a name. The Omega Codex has since been shared with conscious leaders, visionaries and change makers around the world. It has helped countless people move from their vision to its fulfillment. The prayers and principles have allowed so many to clear out old obstacles, transform difficulty, and emerge triumphant in their life's purpose.

The most important thing I have learned from these 24 prayers is this: When we pair transcendence with embodiment, we have the fullness of divine human flourishing. The prayers are structured with nine upward prayers and nine downward prayers. When we master them, we can inhabit our bodies as source ensouled. We are able to make the greatest possible difference by bringing the full power, blessings and grace of the divine source all the way through into the physical! And everything thrives because of it.