

**Realize who you truly are,
and the power you have
to create heaven on earth today
through spiritual practice,
supportive community,
and selfless service.**

MAY 2016



Seeds of Meditation

*Reach one hand up,
and God
will reach two
down to you.*

— N. Paulsen

In an Instant, You Know

Norman Paulsen, Sunburst's founder

The experience of Cosmic consciousness
Is ecstasy beyond description,
Far beyond the self-conscious mind and its perimeters of existence.
It is That which innumerable writers and poets
have tried to put into words:
Gautama the Buddha in the sutras;
Jesus in the parables;
Shakespeare in the sonnets.

Following this ecstatic state comes the illumination of the intellect,
Again quite impossible to describe.
In that great flash of light, all is known—or should we say,
All is comprehended.

The very essence of life force, the Breath of Life which created all images,
Is now dwelling, completely exposed, within and around you.

This penetrating force shatters all your previous concepts concerning God,
The visible and invisible universe, and life itself.

You no longer see planets, suns, and galaxies as inert, lifeless matter.
All images become alive, and are pulsating with the rhythm
Of eternal energy combinations.

In an instant,
You learn more than many existences could ever contribute.
The infinite floodgate is breached,
And that flood never ceases, in this life or hereafter.
Above and beyond this, God, I AM THAT I AM, is experienced
As ever-new and expanding joy, love and bliss
Which rests on the surface of eternal peace.
The experience reveals that the very keelson of the creation is Love!

For lack and want of words,
How can I express this divine state,
This pearl of great price?
You, dear reader, can only know this
Through your own experience of it.

*Before embarking on important undertakings,
sit quietly, calm your senses and thoughts, and meditate deeply.
You will then be guided by the great creative power of Spirit.*

– Paramahansa Yogananda

Eating Meditation

Thich Nhat Hanh, Buddhist monk

We can share a meal in mindfulness as a deep practice of communion with the Divine. When we pick up a piece of bread, we can do it with mindfulness, with Spirit. The bread, the “host,” becomes the object of our deep love and concentration.

If our concentration is not strong enough, we can try saying its name silently, “bread,” in a way we would call the name of our beloved. When we do this, the bread will reveal itself to us in its totality, and we can put it in our mouth and chew with real awareness—not chewing anything else, such as

our thoughts, our fears, or even our aspirations.

When we practice this way, every meal is the *Last Supper*. This is holy communion, to live in faith. In fact, we could call it the *First Supper*, because everything will be fresh and new. When we eat together in this way, the food and the community of practitioners are the objects of our mindfulness. It is through the food and one another that the Ultimate becomes present.

To eat a piece of bread or a bowl of rice mindfully and see that every morsel is a gift of the whole universe is to live deeply. When mindfulness is present, the Spirit is already there.

*In
the silence
of my being,
I can hear
the pulsating hum
of all creation moving
through every atom
of my body.
If I but listen,
I can hear You;
I can feel You;
I can see You.
I know I am
a being of consciousness.
I am eternal.
I am part of You,
Mighty Spirit.*

– Norman Paulsen

Brotherly Love

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin 5, Ryan 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. “If Jesus was sitting here, he would say: ‘Let my brother have the first pancake; I can wait.’”

Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, “Ryan, you be Jesus!”



Where I Am One

Sean Fennell

*We give ourselves over to the influence of the breathing Earth.
Sleep, the shadow of the Earth, seeps into our skin, spreading throughout our
limbs, dissolving our individual will into the thousand and one selves that
compose it—cells, tissues and organs taking their prime directives from gravity
and the wind, as residual bits of sunlight caught in the long tangle of nerves,
wanders through the drifting landscape of our Earth-borne bodies
like deer moving across the forested valleys.*



Where Spirit, nature and humans meet in oneness—in activity, as well as non-activity—I find my center. Permaculture is not just about growing gardens; it's about growing infinite possibilities. It's the marriage of the spiritual with the natural and social, and therefore, one of the highest expressions of co-creating with Spirit.

Everything belongs to Spirit; it's designed, created, operated and maintained by Spirit. We humans are merely caretakers of this divine creation. As such, we are obligated to share all Spirit's gifts fairly with others.

The basic principles of permaculture are *Earth Care, People Care, and Fair Share*. It's at the intersection where these three practices converge that infinite possibilities exist. In meditation we strive to commune with Spirit inwardly; in permaculture we strive to connect with Spirit outwardly.

Acknowledging this fact, I'm faced

with the questions: "What does permaculture look like at Sunburst?" and "What infinite possibilities can I co-create with Spirit moving forward—not only for the immediate future, but for generations to come?"

We sleep, allowing gravity to hold us, allowing Earth, our larger body, to recalibrate our neurons, composting the keen encounters of our waking hours (the tensions, joys and terrors of our individual days), stirring them back as dreams into the sleeping substance of our muscles.

As we move forward, the future of Sunburst looks brighter than ever, for what can be greater than honoring our Divine Mother and Father, by loving and caretaking Mother Earth and all her creatures, utilizing her natural resources with utmost respect and care, loving others as we do ourselves, sharing the fruits of our labor and our God-given talents with passion and commitment?



The wonder of planting a seed



*In the vast, endless sea of eternity,
My body, mind and Spirit with Thee,
In truth I strive to be the best I can be,
Better than none, but simply all I can be.
In silence amidst the inner worlds I dance,
Feeling Thy presence.*

Oh the Divine Romance!

*How can I contain this gift from Thee,
How can I let it flow unceasingly?
Awakening gladly to the Sun-kissed day,
Knowing love cannot be held,
simply shared,*

*Given to Nature and to all
brothers, sisters dear.*

This gift, my offering, I humbly bear.

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photos for this article on Sunburst's blog at:
<http://sunburstonline.org/sunburst-blog/>*



Waiting for What's Here

Sharon Ray

Often great patience is required toward the goal of God-Realization. We want to experience God in a way that can be felt and remembered. God is our great example of patience! Desiring us to come to him, the Divine yet waits...lifetimes, for us to turn our hearts homeward. The Lord is the great fisherman! We are on God's line, but he does not yank us in; the Beloved of Patience lets us run the line way out into the ocean! We swim out there and get our hearts broken, make all kinds of mistakes we don't know how to get out of, and then...the Lord of Love begins slowly to reel us in, and how willingly we come home, indeed.

Given the example of God's patience with us, we become inspired to be patient working toward and awaiting the attainment of God-union. **The great good news is that God can be experienced right now as the consciousness that lives in us.** God is the inner silent witness to all that takes place. God is that open awareness in us that has always been there and has never changed: "Permanent, unmoving, the everlasting Seer of All," is how Yogananda described It. The Divine is the part of us that is conscious even when we're not thinking. This Divine aspect has been always with us, is with us now, and will always be with us. **The silent witness in us is our direct and immediate communion with God.** When we are silent and awake we are one with the Divine consciousness that lives in us and is attached by a silver cord to the vast Great Central Sun of I AM THAT I AM. The Beloved is not far away somewhere else but closer than our minds—more real a part of us than our breath.

Let's close our eyes and pay attention to that breath. Can you feel the witness who is paying attention to it? God is our conscious awareness that witnesses everything. Breathing, we invite the Great Central Sun of I AM THAT I AM to fully illumine our minds, our hearts, our every cell.

Oh Divine Mother and Father,
thank you so much for blessing us with your life,
with your beauty, with your inspiration,
and for giving us the opportunity
to know you, to feel you in our hearts,
in our minds, and souls.

Help us to remember
to count our blessings each day and
realize that true joy and happiness lies within us.
Help us to understand what our brother Jesus said:
"The kingdom of heaven is within you.
You need only to have the eyes to see."
We offer the precious moments of our life
to you, Divine Friend. Amen

– Craig Hanson

*Divine Spirit,
you are in the stars; you are in this earth;
you are in the eyes of our companions.*

*You are everywhere,
watching us, reaching out to us,
loving us every moment.
Let us return that love always to you.*

*Let us sing that song of your grace,
your sweet love,
your great forgiveness,
and your incredible joy,
always. Amen.*

– Sandy Anderson