

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

JUNE 2016



Seeds of Meditation

Heavenly Father,
Thy cosmic life and I are one.
Thou art the ocean,
I am the wave;
We are one.

– Paramahansa Yogananda

Holding Fast to the Divine

Norman Paulsen, Sunburst's founder

Long ago in a vision, the “face” of God appeared to me as a great light brighter than the physical sun. It identified itself to me as I AM THAT I AM, and conveyed the truth that the Divine is dual in nature. “I Am masculine; I Am feminine; I Am THATNESS from which the two came forth.” Two equal forces, neither stronger than the other, are active within the creation we observe around us every day.

“I AM THAT I AM” is one of the greatest mantras. When we identify with that life force and repeat those words with devotion and concentration, we will get an immediate response. We will experience that force, that life which is around and within us, keeping the atomic structure of our bodies functioning every microsecond of time.

We didn't create ourselves, and don't even run the inner mechanisms of our bodies. Who is doing all of this for us? There is a divine Being here in us right now that we can meet and know, who would walk fully conscious with us in these bodies It created!

There was once a devotee who was calling and calling on God, going every day to put flowers on the altar, meditating, praying, doing asanas— every practice he could think of. One day when he went to the altar he was suddenly struck with illumination, and put the flowers on his own head! So it is when we start awakening into the Cosmic conscious mind that we begin to realize this body is a divine creation, spun together by dual divine forces.

Why does this creation exist? Why are all of us here? I AM THAT I AM says: “I created all of these beings so that I can become fully conscious in each one—not 99.9% but 100%. I walk in the masculine, and the feminine. I enjoy the experience of being human. I bathe in the waters. I gaze at the universe, and breathe the fresh air.”

To become fully conscious God-realized beings is what Spirit wants for all of us. **Once you experience God-consciousness, it will never leave you.** You may go astray, but it will never leave you. It's like having a gentle hand on your head, always drawing you back to it.

Having this experience doesn't mean you're infallible, or that you don't make mistakes. You're like a child with a new sense added to the five outer senses. Call it the Cosmic sense, the Christ sense. It's the sense that knows you are one with the whole cosmos, and it's one with us. The divine Being is you, and you are the divine Being, along with everyone else! Your awareness expands into everyone and everything you see. You realize that God is the only reality. Hold fast to that divine Being you know!

The Taste of God

Jake Collier

When we think of honesty, we might think of George Washington: “Oh yes, I chopped down that cherry tree,” telling the truth. Deeper levels of honesty—being honest with ourselves—have been documented through interviews with people who’ve had near death experiences. Many of them share a common occurrence: entering a tunnel, and seeing a wondrous white light at the end of the tunnel, which was a living being radiating infinite love and grace. They found themselves being drawn to the light.

In that tunnel they passed relatives, and pets, and reviewed experiences of the past. Each received a life review before the light. There was no judgment, no right or wrong; it was simply a review of their life.

When I meditate on honesty, I reflect on: Am I achieving goals that I have set? If my goal is to meditate for twenty minutes, did I do that? And if I did, did I set a new goal of twenty-five minutes? Was I able to focus, to concentrate and see the tunnel in my meditation? Did I try to be a better person, to help somebody? Do I see God’s face behind each of the faces that I encounter—even faces that show anger or resentment towards me?

We all need honest reflection on the thought we just had, the action we did yesterday that we can’t undo. Through the fires of meditation, we burn up seeds of karma from past deeds, and past thoughts. And while doing so, we seed the future with positive images, positive thoughts, positive actions. Then, as we walk into that future, we want to be honest with ourselves: Did I do what I projected that I would do? Did I achieve what I projected I would achieve?

Imagine being in a room filled with people, and you are the only one who has ever tasted an orange. You have to describe to the other people what an orange tastes like. That is what it’s like to be an enlightened being on this earth. You can talk about how it’s sweet and wet, and everybody says, “Okay, I know what that is.” But the taste is nothing that you can convey. Being a good teacher, you come with boxes of orange seedlings, and you pass them out with instructions: how to water, care for, and fertilize it. Your parting words are, “Be diligent with these instructions and you, too, will taste an orange.”

If we could watch, we’d find that some of these people neglect the fertilizer, some neglect the watering. Only a few would end up with the sweetest, luscious, and most delicious oranges—grown by them. The successful ones can now experience the taste of an orange, and be able to share that with others. They can grow more seedlings, and pass on the sweetness.

So through meditation and virtuous living, we are watering and fertilizing the seed of sweet God-realization within us, that it may grow and overwhelm us, opening us to new understandings, true happiness and contentment, true joy and love.

I AM THAT I AM, you are our Mother and our Father, and you sustain us every second. We are so thankful that we can feel you today, moving within us and all around us. Strengthen our bodies and focus our minds, that we may keep our feet on the path home to you. Amen

God has given us one tremendous instrument of protection—more powerful than machine guns, electricity, poison gas, or any medic—the mind. It is the mind that must be strengthened.

An important part of the adventure of life is to get hold of the mind, and to keep that controlled mind constantly attuned to the Lord. This is the secret of a happy, successful existence. It comes by exercising mind power and by attuning the mind to God through meditation. Be in constant attunement with God.

– Paramahansa Yogananda

Affirmation:

I relax and cast aside all mental burdens, allowing God to express through me His perfect love, peace, and wisdom.

Verily, the mind is unsteady,
tumultuous, powerful, obstinate!
O Krishna, I consider the mind
as difficult to master as the wind!

– Bhagavad Gita VI:34

Peace Amid Changing Tides

Cain Carroll

Happiness is a changing feeling that comes and goes with circumstances that appear to coincide with it. Since circumstances are largely out of our control, and constantly in flux, our happiness is always waxing and waning. It swells when we feel good (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually) and declines when we don't. Nobody can feel happy ALL the time, because conditions (internal or external) can never be controlled to that degree. Trying will make you crazy.

The problem is that social conditioning, especially in America, has us believe that there is something wrong with you if you don't don a perma-smile. Actually it's totally natural NOT to—the sky is not always sunny, flowers aren't always blooming, and even cats and dogs get the blues. Without sadness, pain, dissatisfaction, broken heartedness, confusion, etc., we wouldn't be human (and there certainly would not be some good art or music).

Feelings come and go like changing seasons. It's our reluctance to fully appreciate all of them that makes us feel divided inside. We were taught to feel bad about not feeling good. We learned this from a neurotic culture that is pathologically addicted to unattainable

ideals (flawless beauty, eternal youth, perfect happiness).

We can un-learn it! Like removing corrupted software from our CPU... Delete program!

When we are in harmony with our life we feel happy much of the time. But it's also possible to be at peace when dissatisfaction, pain, loneliness, confusion, sadness, or any challenging feeling comes along for a visit. It requires that we simply let go of our resistance to feeling what we feel. In other words, if we can fully accept whatever comes without judgment, criticism, or the need to understand why, then we find a sense of ease opening up inside us.

That way, we can be free to feel dissatisfied without being anxious about it. Feeling less anxious, we have less dissatisfaction. The whole thing un-winds itself.

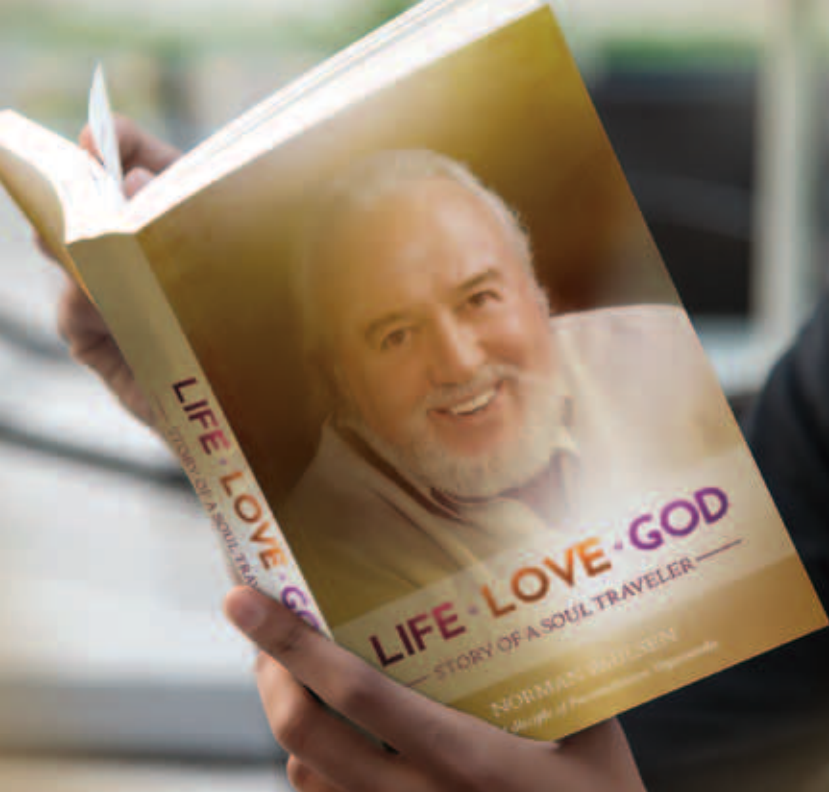
Admittedly, this takes quite a bit of courage, and the willingness to get comfortable feeling uncomfortable. But if we do this repeatedly, moment after moment, day after day, our inner conflict melts like a chunk of ice into a flowing stream. We discover a basic joy and peace that is available to us all the time, even amid the changing tides of our thoughts, feelings, sensations, and circumstances.

*This world we live in
has been compared to a web.
If you touch a spider web in one
place, the whole web quivers.*

*Our vibrations,
our thoughts,
what we do,
all send a quiver
through the web
of this planet.*

*May the vibrations
that we each send out
this moment, this day,
be for the healing
and comfort
and upliftment of all.*

– Sibylle Custer



Life · Love · God

The Story of a Soul Traveler

Coming soon! We are excited to announce that the new edition of Sunburst founder Norman Paulsen's autobiography is being published.

Read the fascinating story of an American yogi's lifelong journey of Self-realization and his pursuit of oneness with God.

Pre-order your copy today! Reserve yours at a special discounted rate; call Sunburst's office at 805-736-6528 or email ContactUs@SunburstOnline.org (this offer expires June 30).

Stilling the Mind

*Daily meditation is the key
to stilling the mind.*

The glory of India's ancient sages is that they discovered the liberating truth:
To control the breath is to control the mind.

Talking with Arjuna, God says:
"The state of constant calmness (neutralization of restless thoughts) is attained by the continuous practice of meditation and by keeping the attention fixed at the point between the eyebrows. In this state of calmness, man witnesses the thoughts and emotions and their workings without being disturbed at all, reflecting in his consciousness only the unchangeable image of Spirit."

– *Bhagavad Gita,*
Paramahansa Yogananda translation

June Meditation Topics

Each week, Sunburst's Sunday Service is centered around a seasonal theme. You are invited to contemplate along with us.

June 5th – Stilling the Mind

A mind that is fast is unhealthy. A mind that is peaceful is sound. A mind that is still is divine.

– Eknath Easwaran

June 12th – Conscious Speech: Compassionate Communication

Speak in a way that brings lasting happiness to others.

– Paramahansa Yogananda

June 19th – God As Divine Father

Let us occupy ourselves entirely in knowing God, learning to love him equally in times of distress and in times of joy.

– Brother Lawrence

June 26th – Practicing Perseverance

Forget the past. Everything will improve in the future if you are making a spiritual effort now.

– Sri Yukteswar