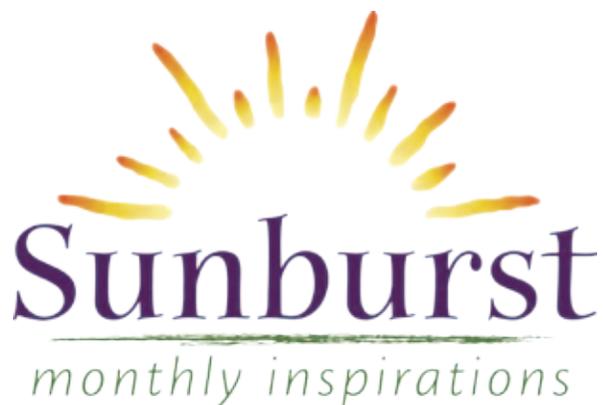


**Realize who you truly are,
and the power you can generate
to create heaven on earth
through spiritual practice,
supportive community,
and selfless service.**

JULY 2015



Seeds of Meditation

Change
no circumstance
in my life.

Change me.

– Sister Gyanamata

Children of Consciousness

Norman Paulsen, Sunburst's founder

Our Creator has everything but our love. If we give love and devotion to God in our meditations and activities, we begin to see, to feel God's presence. We're all swimming in that Presence. It's here now for each one of us as much as it ever will be, but we must discover this for ourselves.

We are truly children of consciousness, the offspring of God. If we open our minds and fully receive that consciousness, we can know our divine Father who hovers above us, waiting to be invited in; we can know our divine Mother, who always stands at our side, supporting and encouraging us.

We enter these bodies as beings of consciousness, and we leave as beings of consciousness clothed in bodies of light. God inhabits and blesses those who welcome this. The more we seek it, the more Spirit comes to us. Our real offering to God is our moments in meditation. In the morning and in the evening, giving our love and life force attracts this divine consciousness. Wondrous it is, as bright as the sun shining today, and called *the Christ*. It contains every being that ever attained this consciousness. They are all there in that divine Sun, saints and prophets of all religions, all traditions. Whoever we wish to see can come forth from that Light.

This pure light of consciousness programs the great higher brain within us. This great upper chamber is where we're all one, all divinely connected to Him, to Her. God programs this great higher brain with the knowledge that projected the creation. Whatever we desire to know can be found there; it reveals itself to us.

Open that door at the crown of your head and keep it open when you're meditating, working, wherever you are. Keep that light descending into you. Pretty soon it starts becoming a reality. **First you imagine it a bit, but then it begins to happen. It brings joy; it brings bliss; it brings love.** It makes the tears of joy run from your eyes; it fulfills you, and it's immortal.

We can sense our real nature, that we're all immortal spirits, daughters and sons of God. In the great upper chamber, we attend the last supper; we see the consciousness of God coming toward us to envelop us. The false self—the little ego—falls away, and the great Self, the spirit of God, remembers everything it has done and everywhere it has been.

Why meditate? To know God face to face. To feel this Presence. When this occurs, God becomes your playmate. Spirit gives you things to do and inspires you to build things to help our world, to conquer disease, to overcome negativity. Keep the door open on the crown of your head and keep breathing in God from this day forward. It's so easy to do! When you start believing that Spirit is here, you will find out it really is so. It makes its presence known to us; it wants us to know. It's pushing us toward itself now, so that we might know.

What you do every day matters more than what you do once in awhile.

– Gretchen Rubin

Practicing Perseverance

Greg Anderson

While thinking about the virtue of Perseverance, I considered those who have inspired me. People like Diana Nyad, who tried five times to swim from Cuba to Key West and, after the age of 60, finally completed that goal. Then there are movie characters like Rocky, who probably inspired the Chinese saying, “Get knocked down seven times, get up eight.”

I began to notice that in all of nature, perseverance is a virtue. Consider the wonders of pigweed. I have a granite sidewalk that’s about two inches thick of decomposed granite, and somehow pigweed seed can send roots down into this stone and grow a stem. It takes much power and perseverance to do something like that. Recently I was driving around the ranch and noticed a doe who was short on green grass, so she was standing on her hind legs reaching for the leaves of a tree. That’s perseverance.

Paramahansa Yogananda, who said, “**Perseverance is the whole magic of spiritual success,**” liked to tell a story about two frogs that fell in a metal pail of milk. It had very smooth sides. One was an older frog, and one was younger. They swam around for a long time, and finally the older frog said, “I can’t do this anymore. I’m worn out. I’m tired.” He took his last breath and sunk below the surface of the milk.

The younger frog thought, “I have much to live for; I’m still young. I’ll keep moving and moving and hope that something happens.” After a few hours, he noticed that something solid had formed beneath his feet. He had churned the milk into butter, and hopped out of the pail, going on with his life.

That little story had a message for me: *We try as hard as we can to seek and find God. If we continue*

past the point of fatigue, and we’re not sure we can make it, God’s grace will lift us up and free us.

The first step of perseverance in finding God is meditation. Jesus taught, “The kingdom of heaven is within you.” The journey to God begins in silence within you. Brother Norm also spoke of the importance of inviting God into all your activities, because God likes to swing a hammer, likes to dig in the garden, to feed the horses, to smell the flowers.

Let’s imagine for a moment that we have a great sailing vessel, and we’re preparing it to become seaworthy. It’s in dry dock, and we’re busy making the wooden railings shine again, polishing the brass, cleaning the deck and repairing the pumps. We’re making sure that everything mechanical works. The sails have been repaired; the rigging’s in top shape. But we didn’t notice that there’s a small breach in the hull. When we set off on our journey, the wind fills our sails, and we begin to speed across the waves. Suddenly our speed is slowing because we’re taking on water, and sinking below the waves.

In our journey to find God, we’re going to hit obstacles. If our lives are not in order, it’s as if we have a hole in our ship of meditation. The greatest obstacles are our own minds and bodies. To deepen my meditation, over the years I’ve experimented with ways to calm my body and mind, like conscious breathing, and devotional music. It’s up to us to persevere until we can feel the peace and bliss of Spirit that we crave. There is a certain amount of grace that God bestows upon us when we persevere—and when we do so with a glad heart, our journey can be joyous.

It is only through constant training that our practice will grow steady and we will be able to control our negative tendencies fearlessly.

– Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche



*Intuition
is soul guidance,
appearing naturally in man
during those instants
when his mind is calm.*

*The goal
of yoga science
is to calm the mind,
that without distortion
it may hear
the infallible counsel
of the Inner Voice.*

– Paramahansa Yogananda

Why Meditate?

Norman Paulsen

How blessed we all are to be alive, to be present in this moment. I see God in every face, beating in every heart, existing at the center of every soul. To find that light within us, to let it grow, to nourish it, to receive its love and allow it to open our hearts—this is why we meditate.

Our divine Mother and Father want you to know them, want you to see them. The unimaginable can be experienced. When the inner eye of soul is opened, God comes blazing in your consciousness, filling you with the greatest love you can ever conceive of.

Meditation awakens the soul to God's presence and consciousness within you. You will hear it. You will feel it. If you persist, you will find it—the kingdom of God within you. All things that your heart ever desired, through a life of virtue, will be added unto you.

Seek out and find a proven tool of meditation and contemplation. Read or listen to the experiences of people who successfully practice this particular meditation technique. Are you looking for similar experiences in your life?

Meditation is as important as breathing the vital airs of earth. **It teaches you how to breathe the Breath of Life, the creative life force of God.**

Without the vital airs of earth, you die physically. Without the vital Breath of Life, you die spiritually.

Through meditation, the spotlight of consciousness is turned inward. The ears experience hearing from another source. The eyes behold another landscape. The nose senses odors from other dimensions. Touch becomes exquisite, as energies reach forth like fingers to probe the inner universe of structures and beings. Taste now knows the soma wine of divine intoxication.

How far do you want to go? Do you want to meet your divine Father and Mother, I AM THAT I AM, face to face? If this is your desire, use a technique which will lead you to that encounter. Make your decision as you read these words; life here is too short to waste a moment of it.

Meditation, practiced with love and devotion, will reveal the eternal light of I AM THAT I AM existing within you. This is salvation. Enter this light; it is your true home.

Choose a path that will lead you to the greatest of all encounters, that your lifetime here becomes a blessing to others and yourself. **Begin now! It is never too late. God is waiting to hear from you in your prayers and deep meditations.**

Reflections on *Experience Sunburst*

Emily Wirtz

People often ask me how long I've been living with the Sunburst community. It's been over five years since I became a residential member, although I've been a member in my heart longer than that. Hearing myself say "five years" over and over these last few months has caused me to reflect on my early connections with the people and teachings of Sunburst.

One of the memorable early interactions I had was attending a summer program called *Experience Sunburst*. This program has a special place in my heart, and in more recent summers I've been able to help make it happen for others.

Experience Sunburst was a wonderful, experiential introduction to the **Eightfold Path of Conscious Living** that Sunburst's founder Norman Paulsen offered as an essential ingredient on the journey to Self-realization. He taught that, in order to reach Self-realization and manifest heaven on earth, we need to practice not just meditation, but all eight paths of a well-balanced life daily.

The *Experience Sunburst* program's very structure was built on this practice. First, **meditation** was an integral part of the program. We received meditation instruction and participated in twice-daily group meditations, helping us all to establish or deepen our meditation habits.

The path of conscious **association** was also a major part of the program. This path speaks to the importance of choosing to surround ourselves with people who bring out the best in us. We can choose to interact with people that uplift our minds, who feel called in the same soul direction as we do, and who offer us encouragement, support and honesty along the way. Conversely, it's also important that we offer that same kind of support, encouragement, and honesty to our fellow soul-travelers. Numerous people were involved in the program, so there were many chances to experience positive, conscious association, and witness the uplifting influence it can have.

On the sanctuary grounds each morning, the group engaged in various service projects as conscious **work**. The necessity of conscious **speech** became apparent each day; it's an essential component of working constructively together and developing positive, supportive relationships.

Not only did we nourish our bodies with healthy meals, cooked with love—conscious **nourishment**—but we nourished our souls with the presence of Spirit during our meditations. Free time in the afternoon allowed for exploration of conscious **re-creation**—using our creativity to bring heaven on earth and experience joy, peace and love in this world. I went for many beautiful hikes with my new friends; we baked pizzas in an earthen oven, sang uplifting songs together, and so much more.

Conscious **study** appeared in the *Experience Sunburst* program in the form of studying spiritual principles, nature, and other enriching, constructive topics. It also appeared in a beautiful form I had not thought about before—the inner study of our own souls through meditation, prayer and contemplation.

The willingness of participants and leaders alike to be open conduits through which Spirit can flow into this world, expressed conscious **conduct**. We all made our best attempts to root ourselves in virtue and remain open for Spirit's direction.

With all these rich experiences, you can imagine the transformative impact this summer program had on my life. That's not to say that other Sunburst offerings have not had equally powerful effects—Kriya Yoga Initiations have completely transformed my ability to contact Spirit directly through deep meditation.

As part of its mission, Sunburst is always looking for ways to help people experience Spirit and walk the soul-liberating path of Self-realization. Please feel free to e-mail, call, or write. We love to hear from you!

