

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

NOVEMBER 2015



Seeds of Meditation

*There are only two ways
to live your life.*

*One is as though
nothing is a miracle.*

*The other is as though
everything is a miracle.*

— Albert Einstein

The Breath of Life

Norman Paulsen, Sunburst's founder

Life is knocking at the door on the crown of your head. Open the door and let it descend into your heart. Feel the fingers of God, the dual sacred forces of energy and consciousness, entering into you. The Divine is here with you now as much as it ever will be; we each have to realize this.

Spirit's blazing light above your head makes no sound, yet without its presence you would not exist. It's always there, and you will see it, if you persist in your desire and practice. It is the ignition of energy that was created within each one of us before our beginnings in these bodies.

When I was a young man, the indescribable light came upon me in deep meditation. It seemed I was looking straight up into a tunnel of light filled with colors like a rainbow. I was invited into the tunnel, and into the blazing light shining like a sun at the end of it.

I suddenly realized that I was not breathing. I began to struggle, feeling that if I didn't breathe I would surely die. Then I realized a Presence was standing beside me. It seemed to fill the whole tunnel with light, and said: **My son, be not afraid. Breathe from my mouth the breath of life.**

Coming through the tunnel, I felt a cool sensation, like a breeze in my face softly blowing from that light, that sun, and from all eternity. I ceased struggling, relaxed, and immediately realized that I was alive in my body without the necessity of breathing.

My true Self, the pure Self—that part of each one of us that is immortal, that existed before we came into these bodies—was revealed to me. We each have known it before, have tasted it. God wants all of us to know this immortality again, to know who we truly are. We are not limited to just a few years, a few orbits around this sun on this tiny world. It is only a temporary stop here, a place to move onward toward perfection—that perfection that allows Spirit to guide us, not our little egos with all of their desires. As Jesus said, "Not my will, but thy will be done."

Spirit moves through the crowns of our heads, into our bodies, and fills us with this realization, this ecstasy, this love. This is what life is about. When we're young, we're full of desires for the images we see around us, and spend our time in their pursuit. The ego's desires create a karmic wheel that keeps on turning, and to the ego it seems there's time for nothing else. If we can stop long enough to say, "Not my will, but thy will," we will walk and play and talk and work with God in this life.

*Joy
is what happens to us
when we allow ourselves to recognize
how good things really are.*

– Marianne Williamson



Courage and Trust

Sibylle Custer

When I was a kid growing up in a mining town in Germany, I saw an example of people who had everyday courage on the job, based on trust. There were several coal mines and steel mills in that town, and at least three-quarters of the local men went to work in those businesses. One plant was so big, it had several different entrances, different gates, and at shift change I'd see hundreds of people coming out of those gates and streaming into them. I was always wondering what was going on inside there, behind the gate.

One time, on a field trip from school, our class had permission to go inside and watch the people work. We came into a building which was so high and vast, we could not see the end of it in either direction. We were directed onto a balcony to watch what the workers were doing from a safe distance.

We did not see the whole process, only a part of it, but that part was fascinating. It was not a plant that produced steel, but the plant where steel was shaped. It was still hot. The whole area was really warm. The red hot steel bars were maybe as broad as a brick, but long, the length of several people. As these bars went through openings in a device, they were pressed by speed and force, then were suspended on the other side before going through another opening a little bit away. This process kept repeating itself, and the bars gradually became a certain shape by being pressed through these holes.

The workers were right in between two of these machines, and they had to watch out when that red hot iron was shooting out of an opening. They had to grab it with tongs and turn around and direct it into the next opening. I don't know

if they had any protective gear, but they were in the middle of danger pretty much all through their shift. They were at the center point of quick decisions to keep themselves safe and the job on track.

I thought, "What are they doing?" They were in harm's way during the whole time of their job. Knowing that, I had deep respect for them, for every face that I saw afterwards going into and out of that gate alive.

I don't know if these workers were thinking about courage. It was normal for them to do that type of work. But what I understand now is that courage grows out of a basic trust in life. These workers, probably unconsciously, had this trust in life, that when they went to do their work they would have the presence of mind to judge just right, have their bodies function just right, always out of harm's way. How would you survive a job like that, without having this trust?

We can have that same kind of trust, a trust that the small and big events of our daily lives all have a common thread; they are not haphazard. **There is a divine intelligence in our lives, known or unknown to us**, that is putting together all these events to lead us back to our Source.

All our deeds can lead us back to our source, which is God, the divine intelligence that is working in our lives right now. To gain that trust fully, with all our hearts, is what makes us meditate deeply—we want to reach that goal. All those life events that we go through are good if they make us think what they are there for. If we contemplate them, they will help us get closer to Self-realization. That trust will help you go forward with courage.

Security
is mostly a superstition.
It does not exist
in nature,
nor do the children of men
as a whole experience it.
Avoiding danger
is no safer in the long run
than outright exposure.
Life is either
a daring adventure,
or nothing.

– Helen Keller

Embracing the Unexpected

Dawn King

We were holding our neighbors' hands as we stood in a circle before dinner one evening during the uplifting Experience Sunburst program. Each person in turn was to say aloud one word expressing what they were thankful for.

"Friends...love...acceptance...virtue," came as some of the answers. "Love," and several other words were repeated. My answer, "the unexpected," may have seemed rather strange, and certainly no one cared to repeat that. Later I had time to reflect on why that word jumped to my lips.

The past week had been punctuated with unexpected happenings. Although I was not supposed to be a participant in Experience Sunburst, here I was dropping in as often as I could to video whatever was taking place. Often it seemed my timing was askew, yet imaging opportunities were plentiful.

In the back of my mind, I kept thinking someone better qualified should be doing this job. But no one else appeared. Amazingly the number of video clips kept growing, and I could imagine offering a brief showing for the participants.

The unexpected means much more to me than taking videos. Life has given me so many surprises over the years. I've found myself learning many unanticipated and interesting skills, including some sports. Relationships have mysteriously formed...and ended. Opportunities for work appeared out of the blue; here's an example.

One spring day in 1969, I was sitting on a remote Spanish beach, homeless,

hungry, and out of money, asking God, "What next?"

Just then a stranger approached, speaking in English. "I understand you can type well, and know American spellings." Quickly I had a job, a place to live, and was embarked on a life-long career in publishing. The stranger was a writer for National Geographic and found exactly who he needed to assist him with a book and other projects; this was the miracle of a successful business relationship.

Experiences I wouldn't wish on anyone have also been unexpected. My mother came to visit for three weeks and I became more and more ill. At first it was whooping cough; I didn't even know I'd been exposed. Next, I couldn't breathe due to complications of acute asthma. My husband rushed me to an emergency clinic. Mom had to witness this near-death drama—not how I'd imagined entertaining her.

The unexpected invites us to change, to see life in a new way, to be more aware of divine grace in action, and always to be grateful. **Whenever I encounter the unexpected, I know God is very near and inviting me to come closer.** I could say God is tapping me on the shoulder, but sometimes it feels more like a big hug. Here's wishing you some unexpected God-realization.



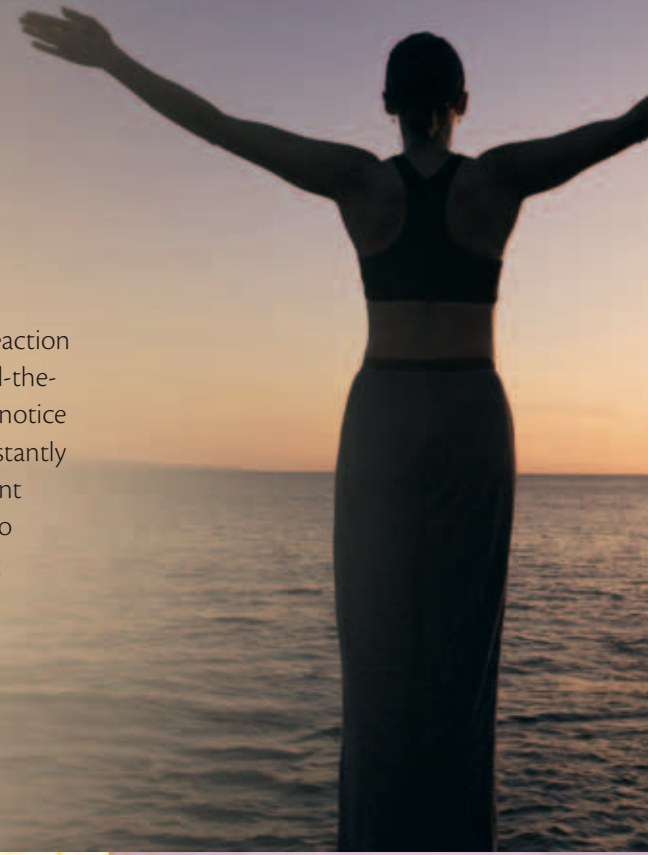
Gratitude

I am thankful for a lawn that needs mowing, windows that need cleaning and gutters that need fixing because it means I have a home.... I am thankful for the piles of laundry and ironing because it means my loved ones are nearby.

– Nancie J. Carmody

Gratitude should not be just a reaction to getting what you want, but an all-the-time gratitude, the kind where you notice the little things and where you constantly look for the good, even in unpleasant situations. Start bringing gratitude to your experiences, instead of waiting for a positive experience in order to feel grateful.

– Marelisa Fabrega



Home Is Where the Breath Is

Sharon Ray

Through the mist we came together in the temple for our first weekday morning of the Experience Sunburst program. We were given our first Conscious Living practice: Follow the breath!

How good it is to come home to the breath. As we consciously breathe in and out, it takes us within our body temple to where the Divine lives at the center of the cave of the heart as peace, as joy, as love. Connecting with the breath keeps us in touch with our conscious awareness, with the presence

of the Eternal Witness residing at the center of our higher brain.

Breathing in, breathing out...knowing that I am breathing in and breathing out...watching and connecting inside as often as I can for as long as I can. This is the sacred practice for today. It is an ancient practice, followed within the great spiritual paths of all time.

I have written the word, "BREATHE" on my hand to remind me: "Ahh, yes. I can be home anytime. I just need to take a **conscious breath.**"

*An awe so quiet
I don't know when it began.
A gratitude had begun
to sing in me.
Was there some moment
dividing song
from no song?
When does dewfall begin?
When does night
fold its arms
over our hearts
to cherish them?
When is daybreak?*

– Denise Levertov, "Oblique Prayers"