

*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 2016



Seeds of Meditation

When
we give cheerfully
and accept gratefully,
everyone is blessed.

— Maya Angelou

Moving Mountains

Norman Paulsen, Sunburst's founder

As little children, **we are each born with imagination.** When I was a child, my imagination created playmates for me! I made them so real that when the game was over, they were still there. They sometimes came home to supper with me, or were waiting the next day. I lived in the world of imagination as a boy. The world of imagination is the house of God.

Each one of us has this as a child, but most of us lose it by the thoughts we collect, perceived through the five senses. The accumulation of this data builds up a nucleus called the ego, which says: "I know because I saw, heard, felt or tasted. I know that I am because I see that I am." The world of imagination flees from these reflections recorded in the ego-mind.

But if you seek to find your true nature, you discover that this nucleus of ego cannot truly tell you who you are, where you came from, or where you're going. Following the interior command instilled in you by your true Self, you search here and there, until you find what you think is Truth. If it brings you to the experience of light, peace and bliss, then you have found a path of liberation, a way to regain your true spiritual nature, your divine heritage.

Upon the sensing of inner light, ego may become excited and now desire to use this experience to gain more power for itself, declaring, "I've seen what no one else has seen, therefore I must be something better." Thus springs forth a spiritual ego, a stumbling block. By refusing the spiritual ego, and living in virtue as the ancients have counseled, we continue our path toward the light.

By offering selfless service every day, and desiring to know Truth, we eventually come to that place on the path where the light is within our reach. On that day, ego is put to the test: is it willing to give all it has and enter what it doesn't yet know? Could this be its annihilation? On that day, if you are able to give an answer that is unselfish and full of service, faith and love, you enter that light of truth, and put on immortality. You meet the true Reality, the infinite Holy One on his own threshold, the sea of eternity. You experience love indescribable and ever-new—not a love that reaches a pinnacle and descends, but is forever reaching higher pinnacles.

Thus man and woman can ascend together, hand in hand, and put on their true spiritual selves. Once doing this, the false self, the ego, has lost its argument. Now you are actively reflecting your true nature, your true home. When you have a world in which everyone has reached this state, consider the power, the peace, the grace! This is what Jesus wanted to see, for surely mountains will move, but more important than moving mountains, spirits can be led to eternal light.

Transforming Karmas

Jake Collier

What an incredible imagination the Great Spirit has—to not only bring into being all of creation, but to have the imagination to create these amazing bodies, our earthly temples. Sometimes we might ask ourselves, “Why is the energy of karma woven into this divine plan?”

The original concept of karma was to perpetuate ecstasy in these bodies so that in each lifetime souls that walked in the body would live in virtue, in peace and harmony. In this way they would be creating wondrously helpful energies to take into the next life [good karma], further perpetuating ecstasy in each existence on earth.

Think of life here as being like taking a hike in the wilderness. No matter how hard we try to not break anything, or hurt anything, we crush the grass that we walk on; we might step on some insects; branches break under foot. It's impossible to make the journey without affecting something, and creating karma.

How many of us, when we go on vacation, pack a bag, or several. Yet when we get to our destination, we're inspired to purchase more things, more bags with souvenirs and gifts from that experience, that existence. So it is with karma. All the energetics of our past actions are packed, and coming into this life with us—we bring our soul's baggage from past existences due to the law of cause and effect.

Karma belongs not only to individuals—there is group karma, community karma, city karma, and country karma. It can be seen throughout history, wherein

civilizations have risen and fallen, also countries have flourished and perished.

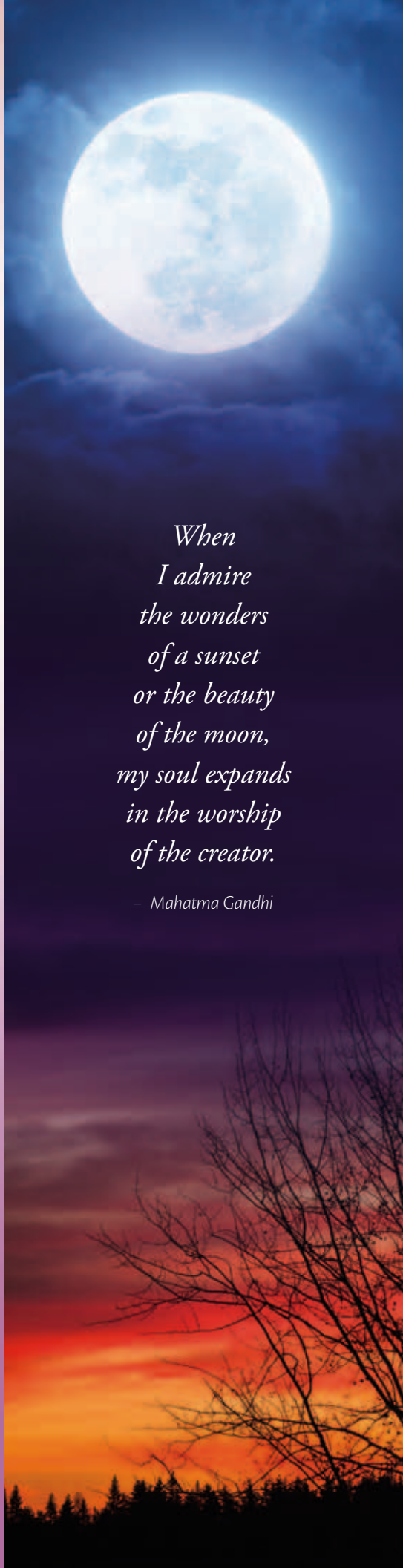
Cause and effect is really a wonderful cosmic design, because, like the scales of justice, we can pack our virtuous thoughts and purely motivated actions onto one side of the scale, tipping it toward a better life for ourselves, a higher consciousness, and toward a positive effect on others and our communities.

Many times people use the idea of karma as a cop-out, an excuse: “Oh, it's my karma to do this.” In reality, each moment we have the ability to change our lives, to perpetuate pure thoughts and actions. Thankfully, there have been those souls, those evolved beings, who have come here and passed on techniques of meditation through which we can burn up karmas that we brought into this life, as well as karmas we are generating.

When practiced on a regular basis, meditation can transform our lives, altering our future. We can begin to experience the taste of ecstasy, and once we have that taste, it's all we desire—to taste it again and again. When we feel God's ecstasy, we know there is nothing in this life better than that. When we are totally in that moment, feeling the Divine vibrating all around and within us, it's such joy, such peace.

*Mother Father God,
make your truths known to us.
May our vision become clearer
and our thoughts purer,
that we might dwell in your house
here on this earth
as a pure reflection of you.*

Amen



*When
I admire
the wonders
of a sunset
or the beauty
of the moon,
my soul expands
in the worship
of the creator.*

– Mahatma Gandhi

*If you send out goodness from yourself,
or if you share that which is happy or good within you,
it will all come back to you multiplied ten thousand times.
In the kingdom of love there is no competition;
there is no possessiveness or control.
The more love you give away, the more love you will have.*

– John O'Donohue, "Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom"

Pump Up the Gratitude!

Barbara McCaughey

It's easy to give thanks for many of the blessings in our lives, but did you know that it's been proven that the more we exercise the gratitude muscle, the more we notice things to be thankful for? At first, we might notice the broader strokes of life—we're thankful for our families, our friends, our health, our job, etc. But, like a hidden treasure, we can mine unexpected delights by setting the intention to notice the finer details of our experiences.

I love to garden, and I affirm that to myself often. The obvious pleasures are being outside in the warm California sunshine, watching a seed or seedling grow to become nourishing food for our bodies (much like the seeds of our thoughts sprout to reward us with the manifested image of their content). Noticing all the birds and critters that pass by is another reward. Just today, while watering plants, I found myself right in the middle of two hummingbirds flitting around the flowers. One morning I was treated to the sight of countless tiny finches sitting atop all the plants. Those are some of my most sublimely joyful times.

Many years ago, when my daughter started Junior High School, she came home quite dejected, saying that it was awful, and everything looked awful as a consequence. I gave it about a week, thinking that it would resolve itself. Finally I asked her if

possibly she was so busy saying how awful it was that she missed seeing some of the brighter moments. She assured me that was not the case!

That evening our family took a drive across town in what turned out to be quite a dramatic lightning storm. We were in an area of the city that was not lighted by streetlamps, and the view out the moonroof of the car was breathtaking. She was squealing with delight at one of nature's finest spectacles. I turned around to her and said, "Hey, Honey, this is something good."

Although she agreed, she added, "Well, this isn't happening just for me!"

I told her that I didn't know if that was true or not, but I did know that she had a front row seat for the best show in town; she was not sleeping, or watching TV with the drapes drawn. She was in just the right spot at the right time. It was food for thought.

In my own life, I notice there are so many things that I can be thankful for. Conversely, there are many, many things that vie for some worry attention. It's always a choice—I would say a minute-to-minute choice.

Challenge yourself in this season of gratitude to pump up your gratitude muscle—not just at Thanksgiving dinner, but for the whole month. I'll bet you'll get hooked! My adult daughter is now one of the most positive people I know.

As we
express our gratitude,
we must never forget
that the highest appreciation
is not to utter words,
but to live by them.

— John F. Kennedy

Sunburst Events

EARTH & SPIRIT WEEKEND, featuring Sacred Geometry Workshop

Friday – Sunday, November 18 – 20

Explore the sacred patterns within nature, guided by Craig Hanson. Enjoy yoga, meditation, music, and Sunburst Sanctuary's pristine natural beauty.

WINTER SOLSTICE ALL DAY MEDITATION (AND MORE)

Saturday, December 17

Celebrate the birth of the inner Christ, and begin a new solar year with Spirit.

Meditation: noon to 6 P.M. Come and go quietly on the hour.

Lasagna Dinner (RSVP): 6:15 P.M. \$10 donation

Evening Labyrinth Luminaria Walk: 7:30 P.M. (weather permitting).

LIGHT & RENEWAL – KRIYA MEDITATION RETREAT

Thursday – Sunday, December 29, 2016 – January 1, 2017

Be the change! Empower your journey with Kriya meditation, yoga, music and community. Set your intentions in a transformative New Year's Eve fire ceremony.

DIVE INTO SILENCE – WEEKEND RETREAT

Friday – Sunday, February 24 – 26, 2017

Unplug and treat yourself to inner Self-discovery! Relax and rejuvenate with yoga, guided meditations, sacred music and more, amidst peaceful natural beauty.

PRE-REGISTRATION is required for all events above. Camping is available.

Please call for more information and to register.

SUNDAY MEDITATION GATHERING – Sundays at 10:30 A.M.

Enjoy live spirit-filled music, an insightful talk, quiet meditation, inspiring company, and a delicious vegetarian meal. *Children's program offered for ages 4+.*

Life • Love • God

The Story of a Soul Traveler

"There is a place to go within yourself, to the Light that created you and is manifesting you today. You have the ability to know who you truly are, to receive that knowledge and guidance, peace, and love."

We're excited to offer the new, updated edition of Sunburst founder Norman Paulsen's autobiography—an extraordinary life, including childhood with a blind Buddhist father, youth in Paramahansa Yogananda's ashram, profound experiences of cosmic consciousness, culminating in the founding of Sunburst. To order, call Sunburst's office at 805.736.6528 or visit www.sunburst.org/lifelovegod.

Find out what's happening at Sunburst: Sunburst.org/upcoming/

©2016 Sunburst Church of Self Realization • 805.736.6528 • www.Sunburst.org • ContactUs@Sunburst.org