

Returning to the source, Spirituality from the inside out.

More of us now are feeling the emptiness of material life and beginning to search for something more. But where should we look?

We came from the cosmos and ultimately we return to the cosmos.

We have evolved from the Big Bang. The elements making up our body cells are derived from the same elements that make up the stars and planets of our solar system and the universe. When we die our body elements return to the earth and our soul returns to the Oneness or Life force that is the ultimate Creator. According to Buddhism, Hinduism, Zen and other Eastern Philosophies, early Christian thinking and more recently Western spiritual awareness, we are in a cycle of reincarnation. We became separated from our creator to live life in a material world, in order to rediscover our ultimate spiritual nature and reconnect with our spiritual roots. The events and situations of our lives on earth are to provide the experiences necessary to aid our soul development towards realization and enlightenment. Once reached, we can reconnect and become “at one” with the Creator in a state of Nirvana (bliss) and break free of the cycle of reincarnation on earth.

There are many of us on a quest to develop more spirituality in our lives. There are vast amounts of literature, websites, workshops, gurus and cults that we can turn to, from the more traditional religions, to Eastern mysticism, and the New Age movements. For both the new comer or the more experienced spiritual seeker, finding the Holy Grail or the Truth, if there is such a thing, can be a frustrating, confusing and elusive task. We have all heard of “unconditional love,” being able to “let things go” or reaching a state of “detachment,” as highly desirable states of consciousness to aspire to. Coming to a place of unconditional love for ourselves and others, reasonable as it sounds, is very difficult for most of us to live up to, in the rough and tumble of everyday life. So what gets in the way of these great ideals?

Unfinished karma, entanglements with family and lovers or spouses, hurt emotions leading to defensive behaviour and not taking full responsibility for ourselves and our actions.

Consider this perspective.

If you about the idea of reincarnation, you may be familiar with the notion of your soul, between lives, weighing up your karma from your last and previous lives and coming to a “tally” of what it is you need to experience in the next life. From a Vedic(Ancient Indian) astrology perspective, the soul then waits until the planets in the cosmos are in exactly the correct position over a particular point on the earth, to give you all of the earthly experiences you need, to further your spiritual evolution. This starts with the choice of parents and family you are born into. The soul is choosing your incarnation, the ego and the intellect is not yet developed, as these materialize only as you come into your earthly body. The soul may choose a challenging life for you as it knows that this is what is necessary in order to push you to grow and develop outside of your parameters and to open new perspectives. The soul is not overly concerned with your emotional and physical comfort! This life will give you the physical body, intellect, emotional state, opportunities and restrictions that your soul has deemed necessary for your further development. Alternatively your soul may choose an easier life if this is what is necessary at this point in your development.

Maya-the illusion of the earthly state.

Once in the earthly state, we become enmeshed in an illusionary state called Maya. In this state we are initially aware only of our material and physical desires and emotions. However, as we gorge ourselves with material and sensual gratification of all kinds, we gradually begin to realize that this is not the path for true and lasting happiness. There is a limit to how much we can get from wealth, power and fulfilling our earthly desires. We

start to look deeper into our souls. Once we have decided to look, Maya or illusion begins to unravel and dissipate, as we become aware of our Soul state of Being. However, even though we are all on the same journey ultimately, we are each traveling our own paths at different rates. There is no need to fear for yourself or your loved ones, if you appear to be following totally different paths and also at different rates. This acknowledgement of being on different life paths, yet being in relationship with others is part of our challenge as humans. We each exist at many different levels. We are each here to fulfill a different purpose in this life, each as valid and as valuable as the next. Salvation will be there for each of us when we are ready for it. So beware of coercing friends and lovers into meetings, readings and teachings that your loved ones do not feel the need for at this time. They may have already learned the lessons that you seek now and may not need to learn them again, or they may get to them later, or in future lives. It is important to respect your own and others experiences *equally*. By pushing people into knowledge or situations that they do not want, even though we might justify it as “being for their own good”, we are denying them the validity of their own experience. Don’t be afraid of traveling your path alone. Your loved ones will seek the knowledge they need when they are ready.

Spiritual contracts

According to Vedic teachings (dating back to ancient Indian times approximately 10,000 years BC) at the end of each life, the soul reconnects with the Oneness and looks at the collective past Karmas (actions) of the individual soul. It is each soul that judges itself, not an outside force, or God that judges us. The soul assesses its own progress and decides which experiences it didn’t understand fully last time, or which ones would further aid the development on the journey to enlightenment. At this point Spiritual contracts or understandings between souls takes place. You may need to re-run a situation with a parent partner, child or boss, because you didn’t quite “get it” last time. In this way we choose our parents or our partners and the events we need to experience in this life. Of course, many of these Spiritual contracts will be anything but easy or comfortable experiences. In fact they may be painful and traumatic. However the soul (while it is free of the earthly trappings of pain and sorrow) knows that these are the necessary experiences for our evolution out of the Maya state.

New Life-The Astrological perspective.

Between lives, the soul will wait in the Oneness until the time is ripe for their new incarnation. Once the planets around the earth are in the correct position to deliver the experiences it has contracted to have, the new soul manifests in their parents, as they make love. The position of the planets at birth forms the new soul’s astrology chart from which the personality and events of the life can be predicted and analyzed. The drama of this unique life will unfold from this point onwards. The new soul will see everything with new eyes. Maya is effective in allowing the soul to forget its Spiritual contracts and its ultimate soul connection with the Oneness. The illusion is complete. However, once an *awakening* has started to take place, it may continue to evolve in future incarnations until enlightenment is achieved and we return to the Oneness in Nirvana, without the need for further rebirth.

Karma (Action)

Isaac Newton discovered a law in Physics involving action and reaction in the physical world. To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. According to Vedic lore cosmic spiritual law works in a similar manner. What we give out comes back to us. *What goes around comes around*. Each of us during many life cycles will have given out both positive and negative Karmas. The highs and lows of our life will often be our Karma coming back to us. The truth is that we cannot escape it. Understanding this idea about Karma can be so helpful to our earthly existence, if we can accept it fully. It can help us to take full responsibility for all aspects of our lives; emotions and relationships, career, and other life events and situations. If we are having, or have had,

difficult relationships with a parent, a good understanding of Karma and spiritual contracts can help us stop blaming and look deeper into the situation, to find out what had to be experienced or learned from the relationship. Each of us has unique truths to learn about ourselves, as part of our development through our life situations and experiences. If the experience has caused us to dig deeply into our personal resources (or seek help to this end) and has resulted in a deeper understanding of ourselves and others, then it has probably served its purpose. However, if we are still blaming others for our feelings and situation, then it is likely that we have missed the point. Remember, our thoughts and actions will come back to us at some point. So negative thinking, such as blame, or resentment will harm us much more than they will harm the person they are directed at.

Fate/ Free will

Within each of our lives, regardless of the limitations, restrictions and opportunities we also have free will. This is the ability to choose how we respond to the people and situations in our lives. In fact the events and people in our lives become an active vehicle in our spiritual development.

Fate and free will can work in harmony in our lives. Fate, both good and bad, are as a result of our past actions or Karmas. For the most part, it cannot be avoided. However, once faced with a situation, we are presented with a choice. How to respond. How we choose to respond to the karma can resolve it or make it stronger. In this we do have free will and we can use our creative power to create a better present and future for ourselves. We need to be mindful of our thoughts and actions *now* as these will return to us as Karma for our future. In this we can truly fulfill our Human creative potential. We are creative beings.

Responsibility

A good understanding of Karma and the sense of responsibility it brings is actually quite uplifting. However, working out what areas of responsibility are legitimately yours and which are not, is a major challenge for most. Being blaming and resentful, or the opposite, trying to take the world on your shoulders, are both unbalanced conditions that many of us have experienced at some point in our lives and lead to emotional turmoil and confusion generally. For those of us who find it hard to change deeply ingrained negative thought patterns, it is best to be attempted as a gradual process that may become more accelerated over time. The secret is to deal with one thought or issue at a time and don't attempt to change everything in one go. Effective psychotherapy and counselling can help in the quest to come to terms with the self, drive out fear and allow the light of oneness and wholeness to filter through.

The modern psychological Perspective

From a psychological perspective it is generally accepted that children are very strongly conditioned by their parents, socio-economic group, culture, religion, politics, peer pressure and media in general. So by the time we reach adulthood, we already have an immense amount of conditioning overlaying our free will, and natural personality. In addition, from our early family experiences we have often acquired disrupted or hurt emotions and defense mechanisms, such as denial, or projection, to help us avoid pain and cope with the paradoxes we find in life. We often form limiting beliefs about ourselves and our environment and seemingly fixed behavior and thinking patterns. Most of us have "forgotten" that we still have choices and that our behavior, thinking patterns and beliefs are simply what we have "taken on" from our caregivers and environment. Much of our behavior and thinking patterns are deeply ingrained automatic unconscious patterns developed in our earliest years, usually by the age of six. Only 10-20% of our mind is conscious, so that much of our attitudes, behaviors and decisions are running from our unconscious mind. This is why it is often difficult to change patterns. Affirmations, mantras or New Year's resolutions that come from our conscious mind are often difficult to maintain and can be easily sabotaged by our deeper unconscious programming of values and beliefs. From my

point of view the psychological perspective is limited if it does not include a spiritual perspective because we are spiritual, emotional and physical beings. Effective healthy resolution needs to take place on all levels.

East meets west. Where are we now?

Becoming more conscious, (making the unconscious more conscious) and accepting all of the different parts of ourselves, is what is meant by being whole. *Dis-ease cannot exist with wholeness.*

Such psychological awareness when used with spiritual teachings can allow us to truly mature into adulthood and take our place as fully responsible earthly spiritual beings to enjoy the world as a truly amazing place. E can come out of our entanglements from the past and enable us not to be fearful of the future so that we can enjoy the NOW as Eckhart Tolle might say.

But some people are born into incredibly difficult families and situations aren't they?

What about abuse, physical, emotional or sexual? What about having an alcoholic, mentally ill parent or parents who did not fulfill their role as guide and protector to you? What if you were given up for adoption? How do you gain any solace from this?

For those of us that are born into these situations, it is indeed difficult. However, the truth is that running away does not help. Many scientific and social studies have shown that these difficult patterns run in families, often missing a generation and turning up in later generations, unless a suitable resolution is found which can break the pattern. There are many people who have tried to get away from family patterns by literally cutting themselves off physically or emotionally from their roots. However, down the track, when they reflect on their life, it is often the case, that they can see those old family patterns in their own lives. Often it is also the case that their children may in turn have cut themselves off from them, in a continuing attempt to escape the patterns. So the pattern is still there. These inter-generational dynamics are the same for a wide range of mental health issues and relationship patterns unless we can somehow heal them. Many of us may turn to religion, spiritual practice, gurus or teachings to fill the gap in our lives and escape what could have been our richest and most humbling lessons in life. These are the lessons that come from our life and each person in it and especially our roots. According to Bert Hellinger who is the creator of Family Constellations, we are individual souls born into a family soul. If you observe or participate in a Family or Business Constellation, this energetic therapeutic process demonstrates repeatedly, that we are energetically and psychologically connected to our family of origin and also to humanity at large. Being at peace with our ancestors is a vital step in wholeness and health. This is spirituality from the inside out. There is nothing like being able to be grateful to your parents for your life to take you out of your ego into a humble and more spiritual state. This is a major step in your spiritual evolution.