

August 2016

Neuroplasticity. Is your mind flexible?

heartfulness

purity weaves destiny

THE SCIENCE OF SPIRITUALITY

Evolution of Consciousness

AMAZING FLOWERS

Their Healing Properties

10 REASONS

to Meditate at Your Workplace

SELF • RELATIONSHIPS • WORK • INSPIRATION • NATURE



Experience it
for yourself

Heartfulness Meditation

Find a place where you can meditate without distraction, preferably at the same seat and time every day. The best time is in the early morning, when your inner state resonates with the stillness of the dawn.

Sit comfortably, gently close your eyes and relax.

Bring your thought to the idea that the Source of Light is already present in your heart. The light is attracting you from within.

Do this in a gentle and natural way. There is no need to concentrate or to see the light. Feel yourself being absorbed into your heart.

If you find that your awareness drifts to other thoughts, gently come back to the Source of Light in your heart.

Meditate like this for thirty minutes to one hour.

To experience this meditation with Yogic Transmission,

please contact one of our trainers at
info@heartfulness.org

or via the website at
www.heartfulness.org.



Heartfulness

Through meditation, inspiration

united we sit

a global movement in stillness

the math of meditation:
we are equal and we are one

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Let's Feel the Essence

Not so long ago, the use of electricity seemed nothing short of a miracle. Today, how many power outlets and light switches do you have in your home? Flip a switch and the light comes on; we take it for granted as part of life. Most of us also don't go for more than a day without recharging our phones, as that too has become part of life. Have you ever gone for a week without electricity? Why not do an experiment and see how it would be. Even for a day. You will discover how dependent we have become on electricity.

The human race is waking up to another source of energy to connect with daily, much more subtle and refined. In fact, it cannot really be called energy as it is beyond the field of vibrations. What is it? It emanates from the Source and it exists at the center of everything in this universe. We invite you to experience this *Pranahuti* or Yogic Transmission that comes from the Source and feel its transformative effects.

Unlike our phone batteries that deplete over the day, each time we meditate with Transmission, the charge builds upon the previous one, refining our system and balancing our inner world. Small shifts coalesce into a positive perspective as we silently radiate this renewable resource, amplifying itself exponentially.

We hope you enjoy this issue as much as we have enjoyed working on it. A renowned speaker explores the heart's wonders, a student shares how she achieves her sporting goals, and a parent learns the beauty of his son's autism. There are so many inspiring stories when we listen to each other. We would love to hear your stories also, so please send your letters and articles to contributions@heartfulnessmagazine.com.

The Editors



Elizabeth Denley



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Meghana Anand

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editors,
My family and I really love this
way of conveying our feelings
towards each other.
Sweet :) Siddhi



The Jar of Gratitude

heartful



Dear Editors,

When I was casually browsing the pages of earlier issues of Heartfulness Magazine, I wondered why is this magazine so popular? Is it the glossy images, bright pictures, or poetic beauty of articles?

What is this art of the spiritual heart that is more beautiful than the greatest paintings like the Mona Lisa, The Last Supper, or Raja Ravi Verma's paintings of the pantheon of the Hindu gods and kings? More musical than the symphonies of Beethoven and Chopin, and the compositions of Thyaga-rama and Meera? More tasty than the culinary delights of the royal palaces of India and China, and the monarchs of Europe?

I read somewhere that even great scientists like Einstein used only a small part of their brainpower, and yet they accomplished so much. The full power of the beautiful creation of Nature called the human brain is yet to be discovered and used.

The same scientific world is, however, sensing that a more remarkable organ called the human heart exists in many, many dimensions - physical, spiritual, emotional and mental - and an understanding of the intelligence of the heart, used intensely by some ancient cultures, is now opening up in our times. Egypt and India knew there was something special about the human heart, even after the rest of the body was dead. Modern heart transplant cases find, much to their surprise, that the character of the donor's heart is inherited by the receiver.

The beautiful 'software' called the human mind, more intricate than the best computer program written by man, is a by-product of the creation of the Universe itself, as discovered by mystics and Yogis. When this consciousness is loaded into the miraculous natural computer called the human brain, great minds like Einstein, Stephen Hawkins, Ramanujan, and others are manifested. What great wonders will be possible when the same superb software of consciousness is deeply loaded into a higher order of natural computer, called the human heart?

The doors of this human heart are big and easily visible on the outside, small and invisible on the inside. Unless we go deep within and open the invisible doors, we cannot access the unprecedented openness of the Heart described by the great mystics. It is then that we will discover that the infinite worlds within the heart are more splendid than the universe outside.

May those days dawn and make us ascend to the great depths of consciousness of the infinite ocean. Maybe we are not at the peak, but only at the beginning of the development of our civilization!

And then I realized that perhaps Heartfulness Magazine is doing its part to kindle that dormant consciousness to awaken in us. With words, with pictures, with the spirit and vibration it emanates, and with the feelings it evokes in us.

Yours,

S.S. Ramakrishnan

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Ms Bernstein has been named 'a next-generation thought leader' by Oprah Winfrey. She appears regularly as an expert on The Dr Oz Show and is the New York Times bestselling author of *Miracles Now*, and *May Cause Miracles*. Her two additional bestsellers include *Add More ING to Your Life* and *Spirit Junkie*. Gabrielle is also the founder of HerFuture.com, a social networking site for women to inspire empower and connect.



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Yves Benhamou



Yves is a homeopathic doctor, who is also writing a novel and involved in theatre. He regularly presents conferences on the themes of meditation and spirituality, building bridges between meditation and various social groups and their particular issues. His artistic nature is very much in tune with the joy of the heart, which he is always willing to share with everyone in his role as a Heartfulness trainer.

Clara Smith



Clara is a scholarship holder at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia, doing her bachelors degree in engineering. Race walking is her passion and she continues her career as an elite athlete with success at the national and international level. Her dream is to win a medal at the Olympic level.

She was brought up in a spiritual environment and has seen the benefit of developing a strong connection to her Center through prayer from a young age. She started Heartfulness Meditation at the age of 15 and has found that it enhances all the facets of her life allowing her to perform at her best.

Guy Sharar

Guy is a Heartfulness trainer, writer, autism consultant and blogger. Early in 2016, he wrote about his family's journey with autism in the book, *Transforming Autism*. Since writing it, he has established the Transforming Autism Project to increase awareness of the true nature and potential of each autistic individual.



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is your mind **FLEXIBLE?**

Many of us today are interested in keeping our bodies flexible and fit, but how many of us are interested in developing neuroplasticity? **ELIZABETH DENLEY** shares some tips on mental flexibility.

What does it mean to have a flexible mind? What is neuroplasticity? Observe your own mind for a few minutes. What do you find? Is your mind flexible and open, or is it filled with thoughts and caught up in the patterns and habits of everyday living?

Flexibility is everywhere in nature. It is the same quality, whether it is found in a plant, a building, a human body or a human mind. Flexibility is the ability to adapt, to be willing to change, to be open, to bend and to respond with sensitivity. It is the opposite of rigidity. A rigid mind

is full of fixed habits and strong views on what is right and wrong, good and bad, intelligent and stupid, just and unjust etc. A flexible mind is open to new ways of viewing the world; it is not prejudiced.

Spiritual traditions value mental flexibility for our wellbeing and evolution. It is not hard to understand why, as it is through the mind that we observe the inner life of the heart. The spiritual journey of the heart is full of wonder, taking us into a vast inner universe. There is no room for rigidity when venturing into the unknown!

NEUROPLASTICITY AND EMPTINESS

In Zen Buddhism it is called *shoshin*, original mind or beginners mind. Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki says: "If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything; it is open to everything. In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few." He also says: "People who know the state of emptiness will always be able to dissolve their problems by constancy."

What is constancy? Perhaps it is the ability to cheerfully accept things as they are, with a mind that is soft and open. It is also that unchanging, immutable base of fluidity. Suzuki also says, "It is the readiness of the mind that is wisdom. ... wisdom is not something to learn. Wisdom is something which will come out of your mindfulness. So the point is to be ready for observing things, and to be ready for thinking. This is called emptiness of your mind."

Mexican Shamans understand the same principle. They try to shut down the internal talk, the restless internal chatter of the mind. Carlos Castaneda writes: "We talk to ourselves incessantly about our world. In fact we maintain our world with our internal talk. And whenever we finish talking to ourselves about ourselves and our world, the world is always as it should be. We renew it, we rekindle it with life, we uphold it with our internal talk. Not only that, but we also choose our paths as we

The spiritual journey of the heart is full of wonder, taking us into a vast inner universe. There is no room for rigidity when venturing into the unknown!

talk to ourselves. Thus we repeat the same choices over and over until the day we die, because we keep on repeating the same internal talk over and over until the day we die. A warrior is aware of this and strives to stop his internal talk.”

WHAT PREVENTS NEUROPLASTICITY?

We clean our houses, our cars, our clothes and our bodies, so they don't become dirtier and dirtier. Imagine a house that has been lived in by a family for thirty years and never been cleaned! Yet how many of us clean our minds? Do we remove the build-up of mental patterns that we accumulate through our senses, our emotions and our reactions and attitudes to the world?

Imagine all the past experiences and emotions that have accumulated throughout our lives. As they accumulate and form patterns, we become more and more fixed and inflexible. It is difficult to change unless we remove them.

When we are born we are innocent, open and flexible. As babies we are like a painter's fresh clean canvas, full of potential. Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari says, “Observing little children growing up around me, I have nothing but wonder, and a sense of tremendous gratitude, for the amazing rapidity with which they shed memories of persons, places and things.” He also says, “For me, spirituality is nothing more than becoming like a child, because the ego is what is associated with becoming adult.”

He describes this openness and flexibility of mind as being “like the wonder in the eyes of a child – anything it sees is wonderful. Is wonder in the things that we see, or in the way in which we look at things?”

Wonder is the way yogis have always observed the world and developed their philosophy of life, based on practical experience.

As we grow up, we learn values from our society and family. We learn what is right and wrong. As childhood turns into adulthood, we become more and more set in our ways, creatures of habit. When we are confronted with new situations we resist change. When we meet someone who is different from us, we react with prejudice. We think that we are right and they are wrong, or we are better than them. We are not flexible and open, unless we do something to reverse the accumulation of habits.

“If your mind is empty, it is always ready for anything; it is open to everything. In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few.”

How Can We Improve

MENTAL FLEXIBILITY?

Meditate



It starts with regulating the mind. From many thoughts the mind learns to gently and naturally focus on one thought.

Then dive deeper into the heart in meditation, so that your experience evolves from thinking to feeling.

Beyond feeling is the experience of direct perception, and beyond that the state of being. Eventually meditation will take you even deeper into the realm of un-becoming, as you traverse the heart towards your own centre.

For mental lightness and flexibility, learn to unwind your mind and heart at the end of the day. The mind needs to be cleaned and refreshed just like the body, and if done regularly it brings stillness and calm, so that the mind is able to regain its natural flexibility.



Unwind

Connect with your own Source



Connecting with your own Source is also known as prayer. It removes self-importance and leads to humility. It creates an inner condition of emptiness in the heart that can then be filled with love. It is a great secret that prayer takes us into the infinite world of the heart, which is filled with so much joy and beauty. The heart is a natural facilitator. For mental lightness and flexibility, learn to unwind your mind and heart at the end of the day. The mind needs to be cleaned and refreshed just like the body, and if done regularly it brings stillness and calm, so that the mind is able to regain its natural flexibility.

Nature teaches us to be simple, flexible and accepting. Take time to observe the world around you and discover that Nature is full of flexibility: the water and the trees don't have to try to be flexible, they just are. That same state of naturalness and simplicity is uncovered within us through a spiritual practice.



Be one with nature

Refine yourself



Letting go of habits is not always easy, and character refinement is highly valued in all spiritual traditions, for example, the teachings of the Buddha and Patanjali's yama and niyama. Carlos Castaneda writes, "Self-importance is man's greatest enemy." In some traditions, the practice of bowing is used to develop humility. Shunryu Suzuki says, "Bowing helps to eliminate our self-centred ideas. ... The result is not the point; it is the effort to improve ourselves that is valuable. There is no end to this practice." ●



Heartfulness Webinar Speaker Series *on Relationships*

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NOW

Heartfulness Webinar Speaker Series presents the next webinar on
"Relationships" led by **DR. ELIZABETH DENLEY**

Join us on Saturday August 20th
8:00 PM IST/ 4:30 PM CEST/ 10:30 AM EST
by registering at the link below:
<https://goo.gl/P64z1a>

Relationships are all about communication on every level - through words, body language, thoughts and feelings, the interplay of vibrational fields, and most importantly from heart to heart in silence. Our maturity as human beings is reflected in how we go about this: Are we givers or takers? Are we conscious or unconscious of the way we relate with others? What effect do we have on others?

This webinar will explore how spiritual practice and self-development can help us to mature in the way we relate to others, enriching the lives of all those with whom we come into contact.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Practical tips for how we approach relationships, how we relate to others and how we mend them when things go wrong. The focus will be on levels of communication - from the most superficial in what we say to each other, our body language etc. to the deepest level of heart to heart communion.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

Anyone who wishes to improve the way they relate with others. It will be especially helpful for young people embarking on a career and marriage, to set the right approach. Also, for anyone managing people in the workplace. Our workplaces are moving from an outdated hierarchical structure to a team-based cooperative approach, and that means people skills! It is no longer acceptable to be a manager in today's world and treat employees badly.

See you there!

Consciousness *and Awareness*

- an invitation
to explore the
inner world

An invitation by DR J KRISHNAMURTHY
to an inner journey of self-discovery.



Consciousness as an idea has always intrigued me. Probably I should not refer to it as an idea any more. The theoretical idea that was with me a few years ago has now translated into a certain tangible experience, thanks to meditation practice. The experience of how my consciousness changes and responds to the outside, and impacts the environment and people around me, greatly fascinates me.

What is consciousness?

There are so many definitions in the books and on the Internet. In the beginning I was excited by what I read or heard, but eventually it ended up either

confusing or tiring me. When I failed to establish any practical application of these ideas in my daily routine, it left me frustrated as well. So I turned to experience instead, and here is what I have learnt so far. To begin with, let us start with a few common ideas.

Is consciousnesses the state of being aware of something? That is, is consciousness synonymous with awareness? Or does consciousness result in certain awareness? Are they actually different?

I ask you to explore this and arrive at your own inference.

For me, it seems like consciousness is something internal, a state of being that I am in. Let us say it is a certain condition that I am enjoying inside that actually influences my awareness, which is an external-looking thing.

I would like to illustrate this with an example. When, for the first time, I faced the vast and mighty Grand Canyon, it was an out-of-the-world feeling for me inside. My heart was instantly filled with some unexplainable joy; its condition changed. It was a condition of joy. My mind that had been preoccupied with so many little things till then instantly felt liberated and opened up immensely. All of a sudden, what I was seeing and appreciating changed alongside. The change in the condition of my heart instantly changed my state of mind, and, in turn, my awareness.

So, it seems that consciousness is actually a state of being, a state that is deeper than the states of mind which actually influence my awareness or what I appreciate at any given time. These in turn influences my actions and reactions on the outside too.

Here is a practical exercise:

Next time you notice some reactions around you, observe the state of mind and consciousness behind these reactions. Note them down. Observe your own speech and action, and your underlying state of mind and consciousness as well. Note them down too.

This will become an excellent body of research and will greatly enrich your life through enhanced understanding of yourself and others. You will start observing yourself and others at a deeper level, and this observation in itself will put you in a state of pause. And if the pause becomes your second nature, you will have already mastered certain states of mind and consciousness



As you travel on this inner journey, you will realise that there are deeper levels of consciousness waiting to be uncovered. Every level enriches you and propels you towards joy and self-realization. Consistent meditative practices help you settle on a particular level of consciousness and operate from there.

Can you imagine being permanently centered in your heart, in a meditative state, filled with inner joy? Can you also then externalize the same in your thoughts, speech and action? Well, I truly believe that is the goal of every single religious and spiritual teaching. And it is quite possible with a simple effective meditation practice. I invite you to experience it for yourself 🌟

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