



Prema Shanti
Yoga & Meditation Retreat

Spiritual Questions Answered



Written by JANARDHAN MCINTOSH

Profile

Janardhan McIntosh is a meditation and yoga teacher, the founder, and the vision behind the creation of the Prema Shanti Yoga and Meditation Retreat, situated in North Queensland Australia. His journey of self-empowerment through the practice of yoga and meditation began in Auckland, New Zealand in 1981 and continues to the present moment.

His experiences obtained through meditation and the practice of yoga have given him greater clarity and understanding of both the eastern and western traditions of self-enquiry. This has allowed him to develop and share with his students, simple but powerful tools for self-empowerment, that enable his students to confront the challenges of everyday life with greater confidence and ease.

Janardhan welcomes the opportunity to share with you these simple powerful keys that allow you to unlock your own innate wisdom, provide peace of mind, and empower all aspects of your life.



Questions for Janardhan

When God calls who can refuse? Divine message for your perusal

“Gold shines in the depths of the undiscovered vein even though the deposit has not yet been discovered. In the same way, the divine spark shines in your heart, even when the darkness of ignorance covers the untold riches existing within you.

“To dive into the depths of your being requires daring and an adventurous spirit: it requires periods of fruitless searching and exhaustion. But when you finally find the limitless vein of spiritual truth you become the owner of the greatest treasure conceivable.

“All of you have a gold vein inside you that you have not yet discovered. Spiritual discipline is the tool needed to penetrate the rock of delusion so that you will find the vein of gold that eliminates all your doubts, fears, and self-rejection. Repeating that God is immanent is not enough to realize this truth, it is not enough even when God himself tells this to you. You must experience it directly in the depths of the inner self where the precious metal of transcendental knowledge shines.

“You cannot advance while remaining motionless. Take my hand and walk with me. Open yourself to the reality of my presence. I am the driver. I am the One who knows. I am the one who commands. I am the one who understands. I am the one who sees in the darkness and reveals to you the Self, the immortal treasure that awaits your discovery. When you allow me to point you in the right direction, the gold of divine love will shine in your life and enrich you behind measure”.

Who is Janardhan?

Simple question that for honesty and clarity needs to be divided into two aspects. I am a happily married man, who with my wife Mara runs a meditation and yoga retreat in North Queensland Australia, Consciousness expressing itself through a human body.

Describe your own spiritual journey?

My journey started with desperation, burning questions with no answers, is this (life) it? Is there more to life than eating, sleeping, growing old, and death? Is there a God? If so, who and what is the purpose of this God? Why does it allow suffering? I was full of questions with no answers, always why? Where was the purpose and meaning in my life beyond material success, ego gratification? With a healthy scepticism of all things religious, but a genuine thirst to find the answers to these questions and more, I began my quest to find for myself, not just answers, but to bring clarity and peace into my life, my motives were selfish, born out of necessity, if I was to survive my self- destructive habits, I needed to know beyond any shadow of doubt the answers to these questions, with fire in my belly, like Don Quixote charging at the windmills, my spiritual journey began.



What “failures” have you had to overcome and what did you learn from them?

By failures, you mean my opportunities to learn, grow and build character, were numerous, with hindsight I clearly see now how each choice, was necessary for me to make, they all contributed to my mental, emotional, and spiritual growth, without making these lessons in learning, I would be a less balanced person. I would not be who I am today. They led to greater understanding of myself, my relationship to the people and world around me. In truth there are no failures or mistakes in life, just choices and consequences, there are no right or wrong choices either, each choice in life has its own rewards, lessons, and learning, just make them!

What made you decide to set up a Yoga & Meditation Retreat?

I felt the need for a retreat centre, where anyone with the need to explore, rejuvenate, practice yoga and meditation, could come and relax in a purpose built safe supportive environment. There is an emphasis here on awakening to what serves you, letting go of that that does not. We share with our guests the eastern traditions of self-enquiry balanced with western insights and wisdoms. We allow our guests the opportunity to explore their own innate spiritual nature in an environment specifically designed for empowerment, awakening, through the practice of self-awareness.

What do you mean by the practice of Self Awareness?

The practice of self-awareness is the process of self-reflection, self-correction, observance of how and why you feel, react, to all internal and external stimulation, your interactions with the people, situations, in your life, why, and who you are about those interactions. The greatest challenge in your life is you! It is the process of being the detached observer to the drama that is your life, allowing the flow of creation to carry you with the awareness that no matter the events or circumstances, it is all okay, everything that happens in your life, was meant to happen, is right for you. To integrate this wisdom into your being, is allowance of the divine synchronicity which is your life happening now in this moment.

Self-awareness is exponential, as one's consciousness awakens to its source, like a metal filing to a magnet, you are attracted to the intelligence that emanates from within your own self, which flows through you as intuitional intelligence.



What is your definition of success?

Success is being the best person you can be in all circumstances, its contentment and equanimity with yourself, your conscience, loving all, serving all. The ultimate success is self-mastery, where one masters mind, body, emotions, allowing the body to be an instrument that grace flows through in an unbroken stream, to know truth is your nature, your confidence comes from being one with your word, your deeds, it is the integration of your mind, emotions, with the innate consciousness that permeates every atom of creation.

Is wanting to be rich a bad thing?

You will never be rich (financially abundant) by wanting, to want means to lack; by the very nature of the word wanting, ensures wealth will elude you. To desire wealth is inherent in human nature, good, bad are outdated concepts, there is awareness, and lack of awareness, that is all, every human being up to a certain level of awareness, desires financial freedom, it is the prime motivator driving the evolution of civilization. How you obtain it, what you do with it once obtained, is where the laws of karma come into play. The more aware you become; the better choices you make with the abundance that has come your way. Ask yourself, does your financial wealth serve only yourself and immediate family, or do you utilize your wealth for a greater good? Listen to and follow the dictates of your conscience with all your financial choices.

What is “peace of mind”?

Peace of mind has two definitions: for a meditation practitioner it refers to the stillness that is experienced when the normal mind chatter slows, and one experiences the innate peace that is ever present beneath the surface chatter of the mind. The Christ refers to this as the “peace beyond understanding” because you do not understand it, you experience it. For people who do not practice meditation it refers to the contentment that follows the ego gratification of the senses or actions completed, this feeling of contentment is temporary as the minds normal agitation quickly resumes its dominance.

What is meant by spirituality?

Spirituality is awareness, nothing more, nothing less, the more aware one becomes of the intelligence that sustains creation, one’s individual’s relationship to that intelligence, awareness exponentially increases, the creator and the creation are not separate. Spirituality does not mean bowing down to an unknown Deity, going to church, believing in any doctrine, or following any creed or individual.



What is the meaning of life?

Each must find their own purpose and meaning in life, it changes as one's awareness evolves. For someone who follows the path of awareness, the goal is the removal of the delusion of body consciousness, that I am this body only, seeking self-realization, the truth behind the "isness of being", commonly called enlightenment, this is the final delusion, enlightenment, you cannot become what you already are, the ego that seeks enlightenment is the obstacle that prevents self-realization, the conundrum is how does ego remove ego, it is an oxymoron, instead of wasting time and energy chasing phantoms, i.e. enlightenment, the removal of illusion Maya (creation) occurs through the integration of one's individual awareness merging with the origin of your consciousness. Self-realization is the dropping away of the appearance of individual consciousness as you awaken to the intuitional intelligence emanating from the source of all that is.

The truth that sustains your reality. This awakening is your divine heritage, closer than your own breath, the divine play which is your life now. Consciousness is the vehicle that enables you to perceive reality, this consciousness is inherent in all sentient beings, emanating from the source of all creation.

Words are an imperfect vehicle in endeavouring to describe the indescribable, using the mind to transcend the mind is meditation, but using the mind to explain something that transcends the mind is not possible. Everything that originates from our minds is a perception or concept. Explaining the unexplainable is folly, as the finite mind, which is the medium, we use to navigate this life is incapable of comprehending the truth that sustains reality, the finite cannot grasp the infinite, it can only be experienced through grace, for a person caught up in the day-to-day struggles, challenges of life, concepts of the mind such as enlightenment, serves no purpose or relevance.

"The eye with which I see God is the same eye with which God sees me: my eye and God's eye are one eye, one seeing, one knowing and one love."
Meister Eckhart (1260-1328)

There is a lot of jargon around spirituality; how do I know that it is for real?

My experience is that most spiritual paths have limited value only, paths are a circle, the end of the path finishes where you started with yourself, Krishnamurti called this journey the pathless path, for there is no path! “The moment you follow someone, you cease to follow Truth”. Looking outside of yourself for what can only be found within is foolishness, true spirituality is a brutal reckoning with yourself, when one identifies with, or follows any religion, philosophy, or teacher, and stays with the teacher, philosophy etc, they are either being deceived by the teacher, or the teaching is false. There is an old Zen quotation “if you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him”.

For no meaning that comes from outside of ourselves is real. The Buddhahood i.e., enlightenment cannot be obtained. We only need to recognize this self- evident truth, “The most important things that each person must learn no one can teach him,” challenging all, Buddha stated clearly, unequivocally there is no God, no self, to jolt people out of their self-satisfied spiritual smugness and material attachments. Self-empowerment begins with confronting all the shadows and challenges that are you. Life is a contrast between truth (the nature of reality) and delusion, delusion experienced as Maya, (this game of life, death, rebirth). Do not believe anything you read till it is verified by your own direct experience, listen to your conscience always, question all, be open but remain a healthy sceptic, when the student is ready, the teacher appears, become aware of the divine synchronicity that leads you, guiding you, follow your intuition always.

Do you believe in God? If so, what is it?

The word God is just a signpost meaning different things to people, my understanding and experience of the word God is that it is the intelligence that permeates all of creation, the consciousness that sustains and permeates every atom of this creation. There is nothing but this consciousness. I do not believe in God, to do so predisposes me to the possibility that one day I may not believe in God.

Beliefs are just strong opinions that can change according to the information received: e.g., one day I believe the earth is flat, the next day I believe the earth is round, the next day I believe it is all an illusion, beliefs are creations of the mind, are often ill conceived, dangerous to the believer and those around them.

I know from a personal, and impersonal experience this energetic consciousness called God exists! Beyond any argument or belief to the contrary. Why can I be so adamant in my declaration? It is because of my own direct personal experiences with the divine intelligence called God. Experiences so powerful in their authenticity, I can never ever doubt the existence of the divine. These experiences are mine to own, they can never be taken away from me, it is for you to also have your own experiences, do not believe in God! It is not enough, knock the door shall open, start with honest desire, be earnest, the rest will follow.

Why should I believe in God?

Do not believe in God, study creation, see the intelligence that is inherent in all living things, the miracle that is your life, the wonder that is your human body, from whence does this intelligence emanate? have faith in the innate living force that surrounds you on this planet called nature. Study observe question, life is nothing but miracles. True faith grows from direct experience, not belief, for instance I can tell you sugar is sweet, if you had never tasted sugar you can only imagine what sugar tastes like, but once you have experienced the taste of sugar, you now know what sugar actually tastes like, you no longer need to imagine the taste of sugar, you know it, similarly with God once you have had your own experiences with the divine, you do not need imagination, you will know, doubt vanishes, faith deepens, Be aware, everything you see, touch, feel is the divine, nothing more, nothing less.



Religions talk about God and look how conflict has come from religion?

This is caused by belief and blind faith, when you place man between yourself and your own direct experiences with the divine, confusion and chaos can ensure, faith that is based on dogma, on belief, is open to manipulation. All conflict between the religions is ego based i.e., man protecting a point of view or taking the text from some antiquated religious tomb to authenticate a point of view, to promote one's beliefs over another. Spirituality and religion have little in common. When you connect to your inner knowing, your intuitional intelligence, conscience, you have no more need for external supports such as religion.

I am an atheist. Can I still be spiritual?

Only the closed mind has certainty. The reality is there is no such thing as an atheist, someone who declares he is an atheist, is a person who interprets his understanding of life on an intellectual level, using only the five senses to make his evaluation on whether God is real or not, unaware of the higher sense perceptions, the reality is, if an atheist took up the practice of meditation earnestly, sincerely, with patience and persistence, he would quickly begin to realize that there is more to life than he previously experienced, become open to the realization that there is an intelligence behind the creation that is referred to as God.

When someone makes an emphatic declaration such as I am an atheist, he has an egoic point to prove, his cup is full, you cannot pour new learning into an already full cup, it is like trying to explain yellow to a blind man, a blind man has no concept of colour, similarly an atheist has no concept or experience with the divine.

The mind is limited when it comes to grasping the infinite nature of God; in the beginning of your spiritual journey, your intellect, discrimination, and judgment are essential tools for your spiritual advancement, eventually you will leave them behind as your faith becomes steady, strong, through your own intimate experiences with the divine.

The Spiritual Journey

Drop the word spiritual from your vocabulary and replace it with awareness. There is only awareness, and lack of awareness. The truth is, nothing is more spiritual than anything else. When your awareness expands through direct experience, it is all the same thing, consciousness appearing in all its myriad forms as creation. Water appears as liquid, ice, vapor, but it is still water, creation is all one energy, i.e., divine consciousness, so how can any aspect of it be any different than any other? it only appears that way. Do not get caught up in these distinctions in awareness, focus on improving and empowering your life, now, self-correction, awareness, reflection, impeccable integrity, contemplation are your tools.



Why should I consider putting time into spirituality when I am already a busy person?

Socrates said “an unexamined life is a wasted life”, to live a powerful life free from fear is to embrace the unknown and make it known, the innermost longing of the human experience is to love and be loved, to feel the love beyond understanding, divine love, this is only possible through knowing yourself on all levels, then integrating all aspects of your multi-dimensional reality, harmonizing your emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual bodies, unfortunately, the human condition dictates that we learn, grow mostly through pain, it's the instigator of change, why change when your life is fine? Agitation precedes great learning. For most of us we desire to lead empowered fear free lives, to do this we need to learn, then experience our divine nature, our connection to all that is.

What is Yoga? How would it help me?

Yoga means union.

In the west yoga is associated with the physical postures which is asana yoga, or hatha yoga, yoga is a systematic science of self-enquiry, encompassing the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of human nature, the practice of yoga helps to bring harmony and balance into one's life. If there is imbalance or physical discomfit in your life, yoga will help to restore vitality, improve the emotional, mental, and physical health in your life. Yoga asks you to believe nothing unless personally verified through your own experience.

What is Meditation? How would it help me?

Meditation is when the mind sits in its own awareness, it is experiencing the natural state of the mind without thoughts, anything you cannot stop from doing is called an addiction, we are all addicted to thinking, Meditation is transcending the normal chatter of the mind, to experience the mind as it is, stillness of the mind occurs when thoughts slow, you experience your own innate sense of well-being, it is a sweetness that must be experienced not described.

Meditation helps one on many levels, the benefits of meditation include, reducing blood pressure, stress hardness, increased harmony in all areas of your life, it also is a discipline that requires patience and persistence. When the mind chatter slows, your intuitions become stronger; you feel what to do instead of thinking what to do. Your life flows more easily with increased confidence and clarity.



What books would you recommend starting on a spiritual journey?

Practice synchronicity, go into any bookstore to the self-empowerment section, look at what is available, feel what book appeals to you. There is a banquet of self-development, meditation, spiritual books for your perusal, for beginners anything by Eckhart Tolle will accelerate your awareness levels, and then move to the books with heart, visit these websites www.sathyasai.org and www.amritapuri.org go to the book section then select a book through your intuition, any books by Paramahansa Yogananda will awaken and empower your life. Unless you can describe any teaching, you resonate with in a sentence, discard the teaching. Understand the teaching, move on, eventually you will discard all teachings as you will have no need any longer for them. You become the teaching. Your consciousness will integrate seamlessly with the higher aspect (divine consciousness) life will flow synchronistic ally. Most esoteric concepts only have value as entertainment. Give up the imperative that demands understanding, let experience be your teacher. I recommend Peter Matthiessen *Nine Headed Dragon River*, Aldous Huxley- *The Perennial Philosophy*.



How do I become more spiritual?

You are consciousness in a body communicating to the world around you through the medium of a human body, a spiritual being having a human adventure, not a human being who does something spiritual occasionally. It is a matter of identification, in spiritual terms it is called the delusion of body consciousness, to awaken from body consciousness, to integrate your spiritual nature into everyday life is the purpose of your human incarnation. It begins when you form an intention to find out for yourself the answers to the perennial questions that have haunted man ever since we first walked this planet.

Who am I beyond this physical body? what is born must die, what happens when I die? Is there a God? if so, why does it allow catastrophes and suffering? The questions are without end but if you never ask, never seek to find satisfactory answers, there will always be unease and fear in one's life. Some people dedicate their lives to finding out for themselves answers to these questions. Every individual sooner or later must confront their own mortality, wonder their fate.

Some live life never looking or asking, like the ostrich with its head buried in the sand as death approaches. The wise person asks and looks, you cannot advance while remaining motionless, know this, as the wave can never be separate from the ocean, you can never be separate from what you are, divine consciousness in a body. Seek, question, knock, the door will open. Be aware, what is unsought, will remain unknown.



How much time do I need to commit for my spiritual journey?

There is no separation between your everyday life and your spiritual journey, they are one, the same, you integrate your spiritual values and ethics into every aspect of your life, eventually it becomes seamless, do not confuse spirituality with prayer, meditation, going to church, or reading spiritual text, these are all tools that enable you to progress along your life path. Your spiritual journey is this life in this present moment, it is your awareness of this realization that you are constantly working on, reinforcing, it is called CIA i.e. Constant Integrated Awareness, of the divine into your every moment, this will happen naturally once you consciously decide to know the truth about the reality of who you really are beyond the delusion of body consciousness, establish a working relationship with your innate intuitional intelligence.

What is CIA?

Constant Integrated Awareness is, experiencing the presence of the divine in your speech, actions, thoughts. This is the awareness that in every moment of your being, you are the embodiment of divine consciousness in a body. That this consciousness flows through you as intuition, conscience, emotions, thoughts, speech, that there is nothing but this consciousness, it is letting go of your delusion of control, accepting life as it is, without placing judgement and expectation upon it, life unfolds according to the divine plan. Everything that happens is meant to happen and is right, even if it is beyond your understanding or comprehension.

Being in control of your life by letting go of control. Doing your best in each moment but knowing the fruits of your actions are not yours to decide. This awareness happens organically according to grace, each being is doing perfectly in every moment, till not, then change occurs. Everything that happens in life is inevitable because it happened, so why waste energy on concerning yourself about the inevitable, accept what is, discern what works best for your situation, then act.

How do I become happier and more fulfilled?

You become happy and fulfilled by being happy and fulfilled, focus on what you have, it becomes more, likewise, focus on what you do not have, it becomes less. Practice the art of contentment, which translates as, right here, right now, everything is perfect as it is, regardless of what you are experiencing outside, contentment is acceptance of what is, remember desire is anguish!

Desires are endless, as you fulfill one desire it is replaced by another, if your desires are not satisfied, anxiety, unhappiness results, you use the tools of detachment and discrimination, when desires arise, discriminate between needs and wants, guard against the illusion that more equates to happiness, the challenge in life is always yourself, you choose happiness or sadness in this moment by choice, emotions come, then go, you are happy one moment, then sad the next, always a roller-coaster of emotions that control you.

Once you awaken to the power of detachment, to discriminate between what serves you and what does not, you become empowered, no longer a victim to emotions, circumstances that engulf you, everything that occurs in your life is a lesson that needs to be learnt, once the lesson is learned, it seldom re appears again. Happiness is a choice; fulfillment comes from following your heart, finding your passion, being excited by the challenges in life, having purpose and meaning in your life.

The purpose of your life is to find purpose in your life. If your life is dedicated to fulfilling only your own desires, you will never be content or happy; peace of mind will always elude you. To experience the highest joy, peace, happiness, you need to live an integrated life. It is when the wave, (Delusion that you are nothing but the body) integrates with the ocean (divine consciousness) exponential awareness occurs, your life becomes the seamless synchronicity that reality is, this divine play called your life.

Life seems so busy and hectic these days. What suggestions do you have to help me?

Life is not busy or hectic, it just is! It is our mind that creates the havoc that one experiences in modern day living, our minds are in mid to high range beta brain wave activity, racing from one thought to the next, not a moments peace, the mind full of its own self-importance, never present, the mind either lives in the past, or races to the future, replaying from memory past glories or pain endured, resulting in us suffering from post-traumatic trauma, the constant replaying of the past in our present moment, past lives in memory only, the future is imagination, creations of the mind, so why do we give life to the ghosts of yesterday?

The mind is constantly creating anxiousness ruminating on yesterday, or creating fear about an imagined future event, the past is gone, the future is unknown, so why do we allow our mind to ruminate on what has gone, or allow it to jump into the future? Mind training is disciplining your mind to be present, not allowing it to wander into past or future, this is the key tool given in all spiritual practises. In the present moment you always find the strength to deal with what is happening in front of you now, to deal with all the challenges that come your way. Spiritual practice is mind training, training your mind to be present. Your breath is the tool you use to control the mind, learn to breathe deeply always; automatically you will relax the body, calm the mind.

A simple technique is the 4x4x4 second breath, breathe deeply into the abdomen to the count of 4, hold the breath for 4 seconds, breathe out to the count of 4, watch the space between your breaths with full attention, repeat, breath relaxes, strengthens the nervous system, your breath is the tool to slow the mind chatter, calm the mind, relax the body, become aware of awareness, this will allow you to become present, when you become present, the present becomes a present. All spiritual practices culminate when you are seamlessly present to this moment as it arrives. The wholehearted acceptance of what is.



I am often stressed and anxious. What tools and techniques can you recommend?

Stress and anxiousness are created by the mind. This is caused by your fear or inability to cope with circumstances that you feel are beyond your control, fear is rampant upon the planet, it is basically an illusion created by the mind. Right here, right now in this moment, you are fine. But your mind takes you into a future moment, where your fears, anxiety form. In this moment you always have the strength to deal with what is in front of you. Trust in life, it is your teacher, let go or get dragged under. We try to control all aspects of our lives, stress and anxiety are the results. Learning to let go of the need to control is the beginning of self-mastery. As you become aware that your mind is the battleground causing all the turmoil in your life, that you are not a victim of circumstances, that you have the tools of detachment and discrimination at your disposal, become a mastermind, one who has mastered the mind, this gives you the confidence to deal with the everyday challenges of life. Practice meditation for clarity and peace of mind, yoga for physical and mental health.



Can I still be on a spiritual path whilst remaining in a capitalist environment? I still need to earn a living to survive.

Do not confuse what you do with who you are, when you are in your integrity in every aspect of your life, when you listen to the dictates of your conscience, then there is never a conflict of interest between what you do for a living and who you are as a person. Being on a spiritual path means total integrity in your words, thoughts, and actions, when all three are in harmony there is no conflict, it is always the test of the mettle of a man, or a woman, to be in their integrity in all times, places, circumstances. This is a daily challenge we all face, integrity, you either have it or you do not. Your conscience will tell you whether your integrity needs fine tuning. Your spiritual path is your life now, financial remuneration for the work you do provides the motivation to move forward, to excel in life, it is what you do with the abundance once gained, is where the dilemma lies, do you hoard, protect your money, do your possessions own you, do you measure your success as a person by what you have, or by what you do? Ultimately you own nothing but your good deeds and your bad deeds, these are all you take with you when you leave your body behind, the reality is, nothing is yours permanently, sooner or later you leave it all behind, the spiritually aware person knows this fact, seeks the permanent over the impermanent.



What do you mean by Maya?

Maya is a Sanskrit word that is used to explain reality by self-realized beings, in essence it is everything that you perceive externally and internally with your mind, your senses, your thoughts, your perceptions, the unfolding of your reality as it happens, it refers to what the awakened masters call the veils of separation, this game of hide and seek, life, death, rebirth, the delusion of body consciousness, that you are the body and mind only, the illusion you are separate from source, one looks for God, happiness, peace, love externally, with fear or anxiety constantly playing in the background of your consciousness as the dominant emotion in your life, unaware that all of creation is tailor made for your awakening, the game is over when the veils lift, integration happens. Seeker and sought were always one, the nature of water is wetness, you cannot make water wetter by adding more water to it, it is already wet, similarly your essence is consciousness. The awareness through which you perceive yourself, the world around you arise from the same consciousness that permeates, sustains creation. You cannot add to or subtract from this consciousness. You already are the consciousness, no one can give you what you already are. Awakening is the process where obstacles that hinder the uninterrupted flow of this consciousness drop away. There is nothing to attain only a dropping away of concepts, perceptions that no longer serve you. Your awareness becomes exponential as the awakening process continues through to its inevitable conclusion.

This game of life, death, rebirth comes to its end, the awakening process integrates the illusion of one's separate individual awareness into a seamless transition called self-realization. The truth that there is no self to realize. Intuition intelligence flows through the awakened one in an unbroken stream, transcending rational thinking.

No one misses out during this process, which is your life, if you are aware that you are alive, it is happening, as apples ripen on the tree in different stages, so too every conscious being's destiny is to move through the cycle of life, death, rebirth, incarnation, from the beggar to the king, from the worst criminal to the saint, all this is the same consciousness playing different roles.

The only difference between the sinner and the saint is a few hundred lifetimes. In the words of the immortal bard Shakespeare, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players: they have their exits and their entrances", Leave the world and all its contrary ways to the one directing the play. This supreme consciousness we label God. Till awakening occurs which will happen, enjoy this life, play in the creation. Love life, life loves you back. Love is all there is, one can have all riches, all power, all things, but until one awakens to the truth of their being, maya rules one's life, the game continues, when one has love for self, for others, for all living beings, one awakens to divine purpose, that we are all embodiments of divine love i.e., consciousness in a body, be love, awakening is the purpose of life. To love, be love, is awakening in action.



The Realness of Maya

The reality of reality, the senses are real, consciousness is the ground that sustains reality, the creation is unquestionably real, you place your hand into fire, you get burnt, but this relative reality is maya, created and sustained by your mind. In the words of Aldous Huxley ‘There is a hierarchy of the real’, as integration accelerates, reality becomes subjective as one’s individual reality becomes subsumed into the “isness of being”, the consciousness that permeates every atom of reality becomes apparent as it is, the divine tapestry unfolding in perfect harmony, your life as it is now. So simple, when acceptance of your now whatever the circumstances, become your operating system, attachment to your personal agendas fades as allowance of what is, is the only sensible option, this wisdom has been given from time immemorial, the essential teaching from the Bhagavata Gita given by the avatar of that age Krishna to Arjuna before the epic battle between the forces of good and evil, Krishna explained the nature of reality, everything that happens is my will, I am in all, not a leaf that falls or a bird that flies can happen without my will, it is all me, you are but an instrument that I act through.



Integration Explained

Absorption in the ground of all being is awakening, is exponential awareness, where individual identification with body consciousness and all its attendant wants, needs, fears, desires is transcended by intuitive knowledge that flows in an unbroken stream from the source of all that is, through ones consciousness into actuality, there is no attendant egoic impulse to claim this intuitive knowledge as one's own, the veils that claim personal ownership over this wisdom fade away, every thought action, deed, is compelled effortlessly through integration of the vehicles of thought, speech, action, one knows without hesitation that every perception, impulse, thought deed, has been filtered by this intuitive wisdom, each action is ordained by divine injunction, the acceptance of what is as inevitable, whatever happens is the divine plan in action. Perceiver and perceived is reality in action.

“There is neither freedom from bondage to things nor deliverance from attachment to things, as awareness integrates only acceptance of the perfection inherent in every aspect of creation as it happens, harmony.”

“Love seeks no cause beyond itself and no fruit, it is its own fruit, its own enjoyment, I love because I love in order that I may love’ St Bernard.



Why is this Awakened state so rare?

The challenge we encounter when delving into the mysteries of the origin of our own being, is we do not know what we do not know, therefore turn to second-hand authorities who claim to know the unknowable, or those who have experienced the divine ground of all being, then relate their experiences back to us through the vehicles of speech, text, etc.

Aldous Huxley in his seminal book *The Perennial Philosophy* expressed this dilemma most succinctly, "Knowledge is a function of being." In other words, if you are not suited to knowing something, you do not know it! This makes knowing the ground of all being i.e., all that is, consciousness subjective. If one is not oneself a sage or saint, or experienced themselves awakening on some level, the best thing one can do, in the field of metaphysics, is to study the works of those who have had direct experience and awakened to the truth of their being, who embody this experience as their reality, they are no longer shackled by maya, who give simple clear instructions on how this grace is your destiny, for what has worked for them will also work for you.



How do I Transcend the Ego?

The great Indian sage Ramana Maharishi used to say that all techniques of meditation and concentration presuppose the retention of the ego/mind. He used to joke that employing the ego/mind to overcome the ego/mind is like hiring a thief, who is all dressed up as a policeman, to catch the thief. The policeman will pretend to make herculean efforts to catch the thief, give periodic reports of progress, but will fail each time (since the policeman is the thief!)

We are trying to gain Self-Realization with the effort and power of our mind. Yet, it is the ego/mind that is veiling the Self. The attempt to abandon the ego or overcome it, is itself based on egotism. Such forced efforts to discard the mind and transcend the ego end up only reinforcing the non-existent phantom in our imagination.

What Ramana has pointed out is that all spiritual practices ultimately fall short as they presuppose the existence of mind. And with the mind in charge, there are infinite possibilities of experience; all kinds of experiences, including super conscious experiences.

We cannot go anywhere other than where we are. We are always here. We are this present moment. This moment is eternal and infinite. This can only be experienced not understood. Ramana Maharishi dying words were, "Where can I go? I am Here." Even in his last moments Ramana was teaching, pointing to the Self. All movement is in our imagination. If we do not move our mind, the outside movement becomes moot. When imagination comes to full stop, Self becomes Self-evident.

To see this, we need Grace. Be aware, that that seeks realization of the self is the obstacle that prevents this state from ever occurring. Grace is always flowing through us; your life now is grace in action whether you are aware of it or not. Self is grace, there is nothing but that. It is not possible to see this beauty with our eyes. One must recognize it is as one's own being.

The True Seeing is only Being.

Is Surrender and Integration the Same Thing?

No, “not my will but thy will” is surrender in practice, where one surrenders one's personal volition to Gods will, or whatever the persons personal concept of their deity is. There is the one who has surrendered and the one being surrendered to. This is delusion, as what is it being surrendered? Did they create the body and mind they are surrendering; did they ask to be born, what is really theirs to surrender? it is egoic mind in full flight. How much destruction has been inflicted upon humanity in the name of Gods will? Intuitional intelligence must run the gauntlet of each person's egoic mind which invariably translates the information into one's personal agenda.

Integration is where there is no separation between higher divine consciousness and the instrument being used to express this intuitive intelligence, the sense of ownership is not present. The wave experiences its reality as ocean, there is no allowance of the flow of intuitional intelligence only its flow.



Omnipresence, Omnipotence, Omniscience.

The ground of being, God, the supreme consciousness, Allah, the “isness of being”, the self, are all names ascribed to the incomprehensible, mysterious force that animates creation. It is the moving force of each action we engage in. It is the act itself, and the power that generates the action. It is the cause, and the result. As it is the source of life, all manifestations belong to it. It is the eternal stillness and the movement that emerges from it. It generates change while remaining changeless. It is omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient. Words such as always and never which are opposite to each other are not appropriate when describing it, every force known and unknown are manifested by it, past, present, future happen simultaneously in its eternal now. It is beyond the duality of opposites.

It is innate in creation, exists in every manifestation, it is the essence of each object, also the conscience of each being. Its omnipresence exists in every manifested form and cannot be separate from that form. It is the witness, the experience itself, the theatre, and the play. It is the feelings, the most intimate thoughts of each player. The alpha and the omega, the seer and that which is seen, it is every level of consciousness. It is the present moment, immanent in everything, it is personal and impersonal, your best friend, intimate, your very breath itself, the very nucleus of your being, in a word, yourself.



Nothing but Miracles

The wise see wonders in all things! What is reality?, the hierarchy of the real, ask this question, you will receive a bewildering array of answers depending on who you ask, a quantum physicist may reply, reality is a 3 dimensional hologram filled with sub-atomic particles moving at 67,000 miles per hour, held in a gravitational force field, moving around a nebulous molten ball of gas we refer to as the sun, a mystic may reply, it's all Maya an illusion, you are the dreamer dreaming the dream of life, the atheist will say, it's what you can see, feel, touch. Perception is reality, Albert Einstein posed this question to a colleague, "is the moon there when you are not looking"? We have all heard the saying you cannot see the woods for the trees, each fashions the world according to his beliefs, experiences, perceptions.

When one truly studies the world around, the beauty in the sunset, the awe-inspiring splendour of the night-sky, the milky way in all its glory, the power of love, we find that words limit the infinite. Nature is miracles in action, how does the acorn grow into the mighty oak tree? the mind boggles at the intricate complexity of this interconnected world around us. How and why does nature work so well? when one truly sees the wonders that surround us, the innate ability to see, laugh, love, touch, experience, grow. How can one not perceive the intelligence behind this creation? Where did this intelligence originate? The Darwinian evolution from the primordial soup to civilization as we know it to-day.



This wonder of creation, and how we got here. The beginning of the human quest to make sense of the world, one's place in that world, the eternal questions that beget us, where have I come from? religion, science, education, all seeking to explain, give purpose, to this human dilemma, the need to know the answers to the questions that have baffled mankind. Science and technology evolve in leaps and bounds, new discoveries in the fields of medicine, technology, science, gives us insights into how our mysterious and beautiful universe unfolds. This advancement in technology, scientific achievement has not correlated into a less stressful peaceful lifestyle for most of the inhabitants on our planet.

To change the world for the better, you only need to change your perceptions, the world changes immediately, so simple, we find it easier to change others, save the rain forests etc, than to change just one bad habit. Mankind seems to address its issues when it has no choice, learning lessons through its pain and suffering, as individual agitation, pain, personal suffering reaches breaking point, only then do we stop, look, reassess, reach out, seek ways to address, remove, empower our lives.

If you make the decision now to embrace the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, with the wisdom and knowledge that every single event that occurs in your life is for your higher good. How would your life look? Your cup is now always half full, you find the strength within to deal with each challenge in your life as it occurs, no matter how traumatic or calamitous, you cannot control the events or circumstances in life, but you can change how you are about what occurs in your life. This key to self-empowerment, your perception creates your reality, change your perceptions, change your life, see the wonder, reality is nothing but miracles.

Acceptance of what is, is not Passive.

Do not confuse or misunderstand acceptance of what is as being passive or a form of resignation to the challenges or circumstances one confronts in our daily life, it is not an abrogation of your inherent freedom of choice to act in the best interests of yourself, your family, the society you live in, this world with all its challenges. When Jesus recognised the greed and avarice of the money lenders in the temples, was the source of pain and suffering for his people, the urgency of the situation, demanded action, entered the temples, and threw the money lenders out. Arjuna when confronted with the need to enter mortal combat with members of his own family to protect his community from the forces of evil did so.

This world of duality, good and evil, light, and dark, yin and yang, of opposites is a constant challenge, where each person must act in whatever manner they deem appropriate to the circumstances confronting them. The only difference is in the awareness of the awakened ones, they perceive the events as ordained, so their actions accord also with divine injunction, they play the role ascribed to them, acting to the best of their ability to meet the challenge, but are not attached to the fruits of their actions. They know the script to the unfolding drama they are dealing with has already been written by the divine intelligence. This enables them to be fully present in the moment, knowing intuitively the best course of action to take. When one assimilates this truth, the acceptance of what is into their daily life, one recovers more quickly from the trauma which accompanies devastating developments that may occur in their lives. It does not insulate them from feeling all the emotional pain, slings and arrows of life which are an inherent aspect of this 'isness of being'.