

Sat Chit Anand

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Zen, Returning to our Original Nature



The bud
 stands for all things,
 even for those things that don't
 flower,
 for everything flowers, from within,
 of self-blessing;
 though sometimes it is necessary
 to reteach a thing its loveliness,
 to put a hand on its brow
 of the flower
 and retell it in words and in touch
 it is lovely
 until it flowers again from within,
 of self-blessing.
 Poem by Galway Kinnell

The parents of a young boy had another child. When the new baby was brought home from the hospital, the boy said to his parents: "I would like to connect with my new baby brother. I want to spend some time alone with him." The parents agreed to his request, and left him alone with the baby inside the nursery. They closed the door, but listened from the other side to make sure that everything was alright. The young boy leaned over his baby brother and said: "Quick, tell me who made you? Where do you come from? Remind me, because I am starting to forget."

We have forgotten our true natures. We have forgotten our true identities. We have Divine essence, Buddha nature. We are all children of God, one with the Father. But we have forgotten this, and think we are separate entities. We have become identified with our egos. We have this 'I' – I think this, I want that. It rules our life. But we never stop and look back at ourselves and ask: who am I? When we are immersed in 'I, me, mine', we cannot connect with others. When you remove the 'I', then connection is possible. Our true nature is naturally in harmony with everyone and everything. Our original nature is selfless. God, who is pure emptiness, appears as form. Everybody has the same original nature. The true nature of everyone is the same – it is only name and form that differs: Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, black, white etc. But our true nature is oneness that is not separate from anything.

Our true nature is eternal – it has no birth and no death. It exists before thinking. The only

time you and God touch is when there is no thinking: “Be still and know that I am God”. A Quaker meditation group used to sit together in silent prayer and meditation, silently waiting to hear the word of God. One man never heard anything, so he asked the group leader to ask God why he never spoke to him. At the next session the group leader did so, and God answered: “I always call him but the line is always busy!” When there are no thoughts, then a connection is possible. *“Good is the Lord to the one who waits for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good to wait in silence for the saving help of the Lord. Let him sit alone and in silence.”* [Book of Lamentations]

If we abide in our heads, with lots of thinking, there will be lots of suffering. If we abide in our hearts – there will be too much emotion – I love this and I hate that. The best place to abide is in our belly – in the hara which is 2cm below the navel. This energy centre is connected to our original energy centre. When your energy centre is in your belly, then you can digest your thoughts and emotions, instead of getting carried away by them. It is possible to act without thinking all the time. When the wind blows, the tree moves. It doesn't think: “Should I move or not? I don't feel like moving today.” Wind blows – tree moves. This happens naturally. When we are in touch with our true natures, then we function harmoniously and in accordance with nature. The Chinese call this the Tao. Correct function is the natural way. This is how flocks of birds fly and simultaneously change direction without bumping into each other. When we act as if we are separate from nature, then disharmony results. When there is no separation, then love and wisdom arise.

Our true nature is not knowing. It is the great mystery. Breathe in: who am I? Breathe out: don't know! But we are attached to our understanding, to our knowledge. We don't trust our inner “not knowing”, the paradox of which is that it is all knowing. Our tiny limited understanding cannot capture and control life – life is so much bigger than our tiny limited understanding of things. God made everything and is running everything, but we don't trust this. We get caught up in opposites – this is good and that is bad. We don't know the bigger picture. All we can do is use what we perceive as good and bad to benefit others.

The Buddha died shortly after eating food that was bad and gave him food poisoning. He knew the end was near, and he suspected that the person who had given him the food would be blamed for causing his death. To prevent this from happening, he spoke of the two best meals in his life: one was the bowl of rice milk given to him by Sujata which saved his life; and the other was his last meal which caused his passing into parinirvana. Even on his deathbed he demonstrated his infinite capacity for compassion: his only thought was for the welfare of others, and he turned something negative into something positive. If we can do this, then we will have true happiness and peace. [Based on talk last week by Zen Master Dae Bong]

OM SHANTI, MAY PEACE AND LOVE BE WITH YOU, LEELA

Talk: The Transformational Present

Thursday 22 September 19h00

We are in a very sacred time in the history of our planet and its people. It is a time of radical change and transformation, and has been referred to as the shift of the ages. Transformation is an inner process as well as an outer process because of the “as above so below” universal principle. When the inner and the outer are not in sync, we experience conflict and despair. When the inner and the outer are in harmony, we experience a sense of flow and harmony. It is time to come to a greater understanding of our soul function, purpose and place, within this spiritual universe and new Earth energy.

Talk by Linda de Villiers, holistic practitioner with 30 years of experience in facilitating personal transformation, having studied life sciences including spiritual psychology, metaphysics, mysticism and complimentary health.

Spiritual Retreats anytime

<http://www.satchitanand.co.za/programme.htm>

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