

The Inner Wave



BRAHMA KUMARIS
WORLD SPIRITUAL UNIVERSITY (UK)

Insights and experiences from the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (UK)

Welcome to The Inner Wave. This issue's theme is self image and self awareness. Online versions of this and previous issues are available at www.bkwsu.org/uk/newsletter. We hope you find it an uplifting read; your feedback and ideas are always welcome at newsletter@uk.bkwsu.org.

Editorial Team

What Makes You You?

Maureen Goodman, Programme Director, BKWSU (UK)



“Start with the question: what do I really value in life? ”

The things by which we generally define ourselves – appearance, personality, abilities, work, relationships, etc – can all change. Our sense of self can be influenced by what people say, the situations around us and the problems we face. What is it, then, that defines who we are?

Much of the unhappiness and insecurity in the world is a result of our limited, external perception of ourselves. I believe it is the inner, spiritual, identity that people are searching for today. This spiritual identity can give me hope in a situation of despair, show me a solution to any problem and inspire me to change the direction of my life. And it is through recognising and experiencing my spiritual self that I can connect with God and receive the strength and broader vision that I need to contribute positively to this world.

A good way to get to know myself on a deeper level is to start with the question: what do I really value in life? I will probably find that I value qualities such as love, happiness, compassion...the things that make me feel valued and bring inner happiness. I then think about whether or not the way I live my life reflects that – and what is there in my life that matches what I value?

Seeing myself as a spiritual being, I rediscover my natural, inner treasures of peace, love, purity, happiness and wisdom, which I tend to forget. It's like having a beautiful instrument in my cupboard. Well, why not play it? When I experience these qualities within myself, I became a much happier, more stable person. Understanding my own value, I am able to keep my self-respect, even when someone is trying to bring me down, and so can help others come out of their limited perception.

This is why it is so important to spend time in meditation every day. It helps me understand myself, reflect in this deeper way and become strong in my spiritual identity, so that I maintain my happiness and inner strength - and can influence the world around me in a positive way.

Being Myself

Taking just-a-minute ...

I imagine that I am an actor – the scenes of the day have ended ...

The curtains have been drawn.

I see myself stepping off the stage ...

I have played many roles ...

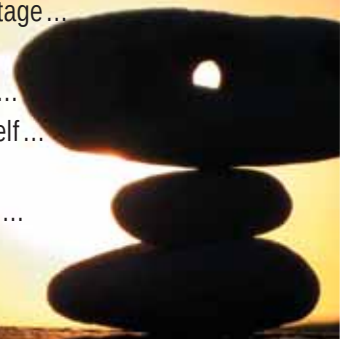
Filled with many expectations ...

It's time to return to my true self ...

The inner being ...

I become still and silent inside ...

I resonate with the silence –
and the total stillness within.



You can download this and other one-minute meditations at www.just-a-minute.org/experience.htm

What's Inside...

The Difficult Ones

(Active ways to deal with difficult situations)



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“The only person who sets limits to what you can do is yourself.”

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The Difficult Ones

A series of articles exploring positive ways to deal with difficult situations by Wendy Marshall

The debate over how we deal with troubled and troublesome children continues to rumble on. We may all have views on the subject, but how do we actually cope when faced first hand with a difficult interaction with a young person in our family, neighbourhood or classroom? In a series of conversations with both adults and young people, I decided to find out if practising meditation affects the way they deal with challenging situations.

My first conversation is with Sarah Cavanagh, a primary school teacher in Brighton and a consultant on the Government's curriculum development board. 'In any class there are going to be a few children who whip themselves up and cause havoc in the classroom. I used to feel worn out with trying to keep the really difficult ones under control. It never occurred to me that my irritation was making them worse. But my routine of meditating before school not only helps me keep a calm disposition, it also helps me see beyond the 'difficult' behaviour and understand what that child needs.'



Sarah Cavanagh

“Meditation helped me to empathise more with others”

'The children I work with are 5-6 year olds and are too young to talk about their feelings in a sophisticated way, but if one of them becomes stroppy or difficult, instead of getting cross with them I will take them aside and spend a little quality time with them, and through that I begin to get a sense of their need to be treated in a certain way. I then demonstrate to the class that this little person needs our patience and care while they are in this mood today. Some of the other children will pick up on that and start to help that individual. With this extra bit of care and attention a child will settle down and become open to learning with the rest of the class.'

'This ability to respond to a person's inner needs, rather than be drawn into a battle with their outward prickly behaviour sprang from insights in my daily meditations. Meditation helped me to understand the feelings swirling around inside myself and how to cope with my own negative feelings. It also helped me empathise more with others, including the little people I teach. And added to that, I think that the calm I now feel inside and carry around with me during the day puts both children and adults at ease.'

Next in the series: a young person shares their strategies for dealing with 'difficult' adults.

Seeing The Self Beyond Limitations

Stuart Boreham

I have a disability – cerebral palsy – which affects the muscles in my legs - my balance and my mobility. Because of my disability, I experienced a lot of bullying at school. I now see that as a positive thing for I learned self-determination, to stand on my own two feet, and not to expect other people to do things for me all the time.

Whether you have a disability or not, everyone has ability within them. It is a question of finding what you want to use as the vehicle for that ability. The only person who sets the limits to what



you can do is yourself. If you can dream it, you can do it. (Stuart Boreham speaking at Global Retreat Centre, Oxfordshire, 2007.)

Stuart was in the first yacht crew, made up of people with a disability or who had overcome a life-threatening illness, to race around the world (in the BT Global Challenge 1996-97). In 2003/2004 Stuart crossed the Atlantic solo in 109 days, unaided and unassisted - the first physically disabled person in the world to row an ocean.

What Makes You You?

We asked the same question to Ian Lewis, trainer in experiential learning in Personal & Social Development, management and leadership coaching

I am an inquisitive soul – exploring, experimenting, bringing newness to habitual situations. This inquisitiveness creates peaceful questions which direct my being, such as... Where am I now – what is this space, time, being forming within me? What am I feeling that is right to experience from this place? What feels right to bring into existence in this place and at this time? What am I learning? What is to be learnt from my being here? What might this world want from my being in it? Why has this opportunity to learn been presented to me?

Always open to new answers and opportunities, I have little feel for possession, habit, doctrine and social structuring. This place that is me is a fun place of being - in creativity, courage, spontaneity, accomplishment and nature. Where some see blocks, I feel openness, friendship, space and wonder.



Ian Lewis

The A-Z of Spiritual Living

B is for Being



Learning to be is learning to be at peace. It is our most fundamental nature.

From *The Gift of Peace – Thoughts for a Peaceful World*, available from www.bkpublications.com

Why We Eat The Way We Do

How can something as physical as food affect the spiritual world of meditation?

The connection is this:

'As a person eats, so he thinks.

As a person thinks, so he acts.

As a person acts, so he is.'



To ensure the highest spiritual life, care is taken

in every aspect of eating. Where possible we buy food that is fresh - to respect the body and promote health.

All ingredients are clean; purity in everything is our watchword.

We prepare food on spotless surfaces, clear of clutter.

Our principle of non-violence means we eat no meat, fish or eggs.

Using neither garlic or onion in cooking increases clarity and focus in our meditation.

We cook in peace, so that the serene vibrations can infuse the food.

We bless our food before we eat, giving thanks to the Giver of All.

We have learned by experience that: 'We are what we eat'.

18th-24th May 2009 is National Vegetarian Week.

Find out more about events in your area at:

www.vegsoc.org/nvw



RECIPE: Cracked Bulgar Wheat with Red Kidney Beans



From *Pure & Simple – Cooking for a Busy Lifestyle*, available from www.bkpublications.com

3-4 tbsp olive oil

3 green chillies or 1 green pepper, chopped finely

2-3 fresh tomatoes, peeled and cut into cubes, or 1 cup canned tomatoes

1 cup red kidney beans, boiled

1 cup cracked bulgar wheat, washed and drained

½ tsp salt and ½ tsp ground black pepper, or to taste

½ tsp red chilli powder, to taste (optional)

Water, enough to cover the cracked wheat, boiling

1 tbsp of tomato paste

3 tbsp fresh dill and mint, finely chopped (optional)

1 tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped (optional)

1 Heat the olive oil in a pan, on medium to high heat.

2 Add chopped chillies or pepper and sauté for few minutes.

3 Add tomatoes, boiled red kidney beans, tomato paste, salt, pepper and red chilli powder. Cover, bring heat to medium and cook for 5 minutes.

4 Add cracked wheat and enough water to cover the mixture.

Cover and cook on medium heat.

5 Keep boiled water aside and check the cracked wheat from time to time.

Add water, only if necessary, in small quantities, making sure the mixture does not stick at the bottom.

6 When the cracked wheat is cooked, turn off the heat and let it rest for 15 minutes. It can be served with plain yoghurt.

