



Dear Participants,

We are delighted to make available *The Flowering of Freedom Advanced Meditation Retreat* via livestream.. We have assembled the following set of resources in support of what we explored during the event. These are helpful guides, poetry, and references we hope you'll find useful.

We look forward to seeing you again soon!

**Richard, Stephanie, and the iRest Team**

## Quotes

"To be loved and understood is the greatest happiness.", "Geliebt und verstanden zu werden ist das grösste Glück."

*Honore de Balzac*

"To love, understand and awaken to one's True Nature...an even greater happiness."

*Unknown*

"Whenever there is the belief in separation there is distress."

*Brihadaranyaka Upaniṣad*

"Depression follows non-recognition of one's Essential Nature."

*Spanda Kārikā III.8*

"As long as there is the appearance of different objects, so long the individual is surely bound. Believing 'I'm limited, I'm imperfect, I'm a doer, I take, and I reject, etc.,' leads to sorrow."

*Spanda Kārikā III.13*

## Resource

[Tonglen](#) is the practice of breathing in the suffering of others and breathing out peace and healing to them.

## Books of Interest on Nonduality

Dunn, Jean. (1994). [Consciousness and the Absolute: The final talks of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj.](#)

Roche, Lorin. (2014) The Radiance Sutras: 112 Gateways to the Yoga of Wonder & Delight. Sounds True. Boulder, CO.

Singh, Jaideva. (1994). Spanda Kārikā: The Divine Creative Pulsation. Delhi. Motilal.

## **Burnt Norton**

*T.S. Elliot from Four Quartets*

At the still point of the turning world.  
Neither flesh nor fleshless;  
Neither from nor towards;  
at the still point, there the dance is,  
But neither arrest nor movement.  
And do not call it fixity,  
Where past and future are gathered.  
Neither movement from nor towards,  
Neither ascent nor decline.  
Except for the point, the still point,  
There would be no dance,  
and there is only the dance.  
I can only say, there we have been:  
but I cannot say where.  
And I cannot say, how long,  
for that is to place it in time.  
The inner freedom from the practical desire,  
The release from action and suffering,  
release from the inner  
And the outer compulsion,  
yet surrounded  
By a grace of sense,  
a white light still and moving,  
Uprising without motion,  
concentration  
Without elimination,  
both a new world  
And the old made explicit, understood  
In the completion of its partial ecstasy,  
The resolution of its partial horror.  
Yet the enchainment of past and future  
Woven in the weakness of the changing body,  
Protects mankind from heaven and damnation  
Which flesh cannot endure.  
Time past and time future  
Allow but a little consciousness.  
To be conscious is not to be in time  
But only in time can the moment in the rose-garden,  
The moment in the arbour where the rain beat,  
The moment in the draughty church at smokefall  
Be remembered; involved with past and future.  
Only through time, time is conquered.

## **Layla – Dog Consciousness**

*Gabrielle Duebendorfer*

I am in love with my dog!  
A week spent with her  
On the deck during retreat  
Revealed her being Consciousness.

She rests at my meditating feet.  
Her sense of hearing opens:  
Ears perking up,  
Blue and Grey Jays in the cherry tree,  
Wind rustling in the Poplars and Cedars.

Nothing to be alarmed about  
She dissolves into inner stillness  
Once again.

High pitched sound of wasps  
Alarm!!  
She jumps up snapping  
Sometimes getting one  
Mostly futile attempts  
Surrender once more.

Deep absorption now -  
Long time nothing

Suddenly something!  
Something big in the forest!  
All hackles up  
A few loud deep barks  
Mostly guarding the deck

Not quite ready to settle  
She sits at the edge  
Overlooking the yard  
Watching movement  
In the yard  
Farther in the forest  
Higher up in the sky

Serenity at its most beautiful -  
My heart melts  
With love  
With recognition  
Together we go for a walk.

## Reading

Yoga is the ability to remain absorbed without distraction, wherein the mind has ceased identifying with the waves of mind, so that the underlying Dynamic Stillness of Essential Nature, is recognized.

### I. 2. Yogaḥ citta vṛtti nirodhaḥ

Yoga is when we abide in and as our Essential Nature—Stillness that is beyond movement and non-movement, whether the mind, is in movement or not.

yoga – yoking or joining; clearing the obstacles or misperceptions that give rise to misperception; realization of our ever-pure True Nature; restoration to our original or natural state; the path, means and realization of True Nature

citta – source (lake) material of the mind

vṛtti – tendency, movement or activity of the mind

nirod – stilling (v); seizing; taking hold of; natural cessation; the evolutionary march of the vṛttis toward Yoga; Stillness beyond motion and non-motion (n); True Nature; Pure Awareness; Pure Being; Natural State

Yoga implies a constant, motiveless awareness that is unbroken and undiminished by any event or circumstance, in which the truth of our ever-pure natural state is recognized. Yoga is ultimately beyond all states. It opens into “eyes open” absorption; unbroken, uncaused, steady, and unbroken.

The mind, through its movement of attention, has three tendencies: 1) to externalize attention, 2) objectify consciousness, and 3) constantly jump from one object to the next. These tendencies keep the mind in constant movement to such a degree that background Essential Nature, which underlies the mind, goes unperceived against the whirling foreground of activity. At a certain point in life, we may awaken to an inner urge to understand what lies deeper beyond the superficial meanderings of the mind. A spontaneous movement begins to inquire into questions including: “*Who am I?*” “*What am I?*” “*Who is another?*” “*What is another?*” “*What is the purpose of life?*”\_Seeking ardently begins as the mind, with its outward orientation, thinks that answers lie outside its sphere of understanding, but within its ability to grasp.

Patañjali understands the dilemma we face at this point, providing both direct answers to the question of what brings true happiness. The direct answer he gives in this sutra is that our Essential Nature is unbroken and uncaused. All that needs to occur is to see life as it is, without anticipation or expectation. In this open-eyed seeing discriminative wisdom arises as to the nature of the seer and the seen.

Patañjali also provides an indirect answer for those who do not directly perceive this simple, elegant truth. Here, he recommends an eight-fold path (aṣṭāṅga yoga), which purifies the mind, dissolves misperception, and gives rise to discriminative wisdom, so that direct understanding may be perceived.

We hereby come upon a quandary. If there is no self, high or low, who or what is it that perceives the truth of Essential Nature? The resolution lies in the understanding that in the moment of perceiving truth, what is recognized is that there is no perceiver, only perceiving. In perceiving time, space, and movement collapse. There is the realization that there is only Dynamic Stillness, that lies beyond movement and non-movement.

Many names have been given to this non-conceptual ineffable understanding—Consciousness, Infinite, God, Awareness, Being, Essential Nature, and Mystery—that everything arises out of, unfolds in, and dissolves back into. Essential Nature is not the result of any action. It is what we already and always are. Essential Nature is recognized when the fluctuating waves of the mind are recognized to be arising within the underlying Dynamic Stillness that is the ever-present background of all movement and non-movement.

Yoga happens when identification with the fluctuating waves of the mind ceases, and radical understanding dawns that we are ineffable Dynamic Stillness, which is always present, and not dependent upon thoughts being present or absent.

## **Reading**

*Spanda* by [Alfred K. LaMotte](#)

The sign of life is pulsation. 'Spanda' in Sanskrit. From Spanda comes our word 'expand.' That which expands must also contract, must pulse. That which does not pulse cannot play, cannot live.

Pulse is the nectar of creation, and the wine of health. Atoms, hearts, moments of time, cycles of history, worlds and galaxies, all bubble up and dissolve as the pulse of the Infinite. Music is the pulse of silence, dance is the pulse of stillness, art is the pulse of the formless. Spirit pulses into Matter. Shiva pulses into Shakti.

If we are going to pulsate and live, we must not only know how to act, but how to rest; not only how to swell, but how to be empty; how to listen as well as speak; how to be dark as well as radiant.

We learn to rest between the pulses. Between our days. Between our moments. Between our heartbeats. And right in the midst of busy lives, to be so vulnerable that we can fall into the gaps and silences, coming Om even for an instant, which could be an instant of eternity, as we let go of Doing to sink into Being.

But we get stuck in the mind, do we not? In dry abstractions, brittle concepts. Whether religious or political, it is the same arid paralysis: lack of pulse. Weak pulse is dis-ease. The organic vibrancy of our body goes numb. Confined to the cage of the intellect, we have no juice, and cannot feel the kiss of God.

Ideology will never save our world. Our world will be saved by the call of a robin at dawn, the flavor of your grandmother's mashed potatoes, the gaze of a baby sucking a nipple, the sting of dew on your bare feet. Whatever the question is, the answer is not an idea. Nor will the answer ever come as the conclusion of an argument.

The answer is returning to pulsation. When you are stuck in the mind, drop those inflexible concepts and come home to what pulsates, the rhythm that softens and expands your heart. This life-giving pulse of Spanda need not be sensational or dramatic. It could be as gentle and intimate as your next breath.