

SIMPLE BRILLIANCE

By Raymond Powers

© 2005

Preface

A Conscious Approach To Re-membering and Re-Discovering Your True Nature

Simple - requires little effort, second nature, minimal cognition needed, easily learned, innate, childlike, low calorie, energy efficient, meditative, shortest route, path of least resistance, a straight line, a circle, a spiral, elemental, primary, natural, innocent, primal, obvious, honest, authentic, few moving parts, interrelated, intuitive

Brilliance – intuitive, conscious, luminescent, holistic, integral, reflective, creative genius, imaginative, iridescent, opalescent, responsive, response able, expressive, intentional, wise, patient, radiance, inspired, exceptional, many faceted, holographic, charismatic, shimmering, solutions benefiting and acknowledging the whole

There's a state of remembering that brings us back to the full self-expression and conscious passion we were as a child; those very activities and resources that magnetized our attention. With little effort, hours were spent as minutes, and days as hours, as we remained enraptured with this/these creations of Life. Maybe it was something present in our environment already, something in nature, or a technology or a person; or maybe it was a creative endeavor we enjoyed that sprang naturally from our internal well, such as art, music or writing.

Creation IS, and it has always been coursing through the universe and our veins wanting and seeking expression. Simple Brilliance is a conscious re-membering of who we are as integrated, inter-related, passionate vital Beings. Through the freedom born from discipline, we can re-discover and embody the very essence of ourselves, revealing without ill confidence, our own unique genetic stamp.

For some, this will be easy, for others, extremely difficult, even painful. We all have our own hindrances to joy and exuberance. Some may need to focus on emotional release, “stuck” energies in their bodies, others will need to learn how to still their mind and others may need to create some type of spiritual cosmology that expands their viewpoint of themselves in relation to nature and the universe. All of this attending to a path that is inclusive, rather than exclusive, of those we cherish and have yet come to know.

There is no one way to freedom and there are many ways that we prevent ourselves from fully living our purposeful vision. We must first learn to cultivate trust in Life itself and then in ourselves and finally with others. Cultivating Simple Brilliance catalyzes a life of unexpected joy and opportunity beyond what we ever thought possible; a Life that fully realizes and expresses our capabilities.

For me this adventure to discovering my brilliance and living in simplicity has been both exhilarating and, at time, excruciating. My commitment to living an authentic Life has required me to examine my agendas, motivations, patterns of behavior and relationships. I have needed to develop my “witness” and remain vigilant in my desire to understand, know and act from an awareness of the “bigger picture”, of how my actions and reactions affect the whole. This is a very human process. It is full of mis-takes, awkwardness and “oopsies.” It is also rich with love, joy and adventure.

It takes courage, passion and flexibility to admit there are mysteries we may never truly come to know and then to live inside that Mystery, relating to the unknown and listening to the distant guidance that grows ever closer.

Chapter One **The Way of the Open Heart**

What do I mean by an Open Heart? Is it a simply a metaphor for a way of life, a way of Being? Possibly. Possibly the way of the open heart is living our lives knowing that our actions have an effect that ripples through our immediate relations and beyond. The way of the open heart is contrasted by the way of living with a closed heart or numb heart. A heart that believes it is separate. A heart that is disconnected from the earth. An open heart that has forgotten, and possibly yearns to re-member its’ own intelligence. A heart that can listen to its’ belly, our intuition. A heart that works in tandem, in unison, in unity with the mind. Is it a coincidence that the words heart and earth and hearth are so very similar? Home is where the heart is, and our home is on earth. I am in complete acknowledgement of our multi-dimensional nature, yet while we are in our bodies, it is our joy, our pleasure and possibly our duty to be fully embodied.

The Way of the Open Heart is essential in living a life of authenticity, of health, of emotional equilibrium, of creativity, of active imagination, of knowing that we are the determiners of our life in relation and co-creating with the great mystery, Life the universe, Love. Until one embodies these principles it is simply a concept and very easy to dismiss as frivolous beliefs or non-essential. As with many things, The Way of the Open Heart takes practice, discipline, certainly an awareness in our ability to respond to our creations. It is easy to live with an Open Heart when our fears are at peace, when we remain unchallenged, yet at the difficult crossroads of life, when tensions arise, when relations are strained, this is when we are called forth into our greatness, to walk with gracefulness, to live with gratitude and to fully accept, humbly, our stumbling awkward humanity.

Fully living in our humanity is as much a mystery as discovering our divinity. To embody ourselves, as well as to ascend, is what makes us a whole person. But we cannot forget that Oneness, although it is our essential reality, the Truth, if you will, walking upon this earth, it so very easy to forget, to fragment all of our experiences, all of our relations. Beauty is all around us. Freedom is our birthright. We have been convinced, and continue to convince ourselves that Life and Love are struggles. This is an illusion, an ancestral lie, a collective conundrum. We have been fooling ourselves and the fool’s bonnet has

fallen down over our eyes. It is easy to stumble from these illusions when we cannot see, in this complicated world that we have created. Our culture has moved from our reverence of Gaia, when we were conscious of our interconnectedness with earth intelligence, and the seasons were our clock, and the moon and the sun were guiding lights and we danced ecstatically around bonfires of delight. We became civilized, our ancestors invented us into the industrial age and then computed us into the information age, and now we find ourselves on the precipice of the transformation age, dangling awkwardly, jumping from this method to that, that teacher to this; adopting forms, co-opting models, all in an attempt to rediscover what it is to live with an Open Heart. And... while we transform, it is so important to look down at our feet and feel the mud between our toes, taste the longing in our Soul for home.

I want to share about the three jewels and the three precepts.

The Three Jewels are: breath, sound and movement. These are keys to living in The Way of the Open Heart. These are ways to ignite, explore and discover your own unique Simple Brilliance.

The Three Precepts are: Still your Mind, Handle Your Psychology and Awaken Your Body. I want to thank my, beloved friend and mentor Robert Frey for bringing these precepts to my attention.

Breath, sound and movement are directly linked to stilling your mind, handling your psychology and getting into your body.

From our very first breath we said yes to Life. We came out of the blackness, out of the void, out of our Mother's womb and inhaled and exhaled. Inhaled and exhaled those first breaths, that most likely were shocking, foreign and eventually became the food for our lifeblood. The oxygen that we breathe feeds every cell in our body, that sparks our intelligence, that gives us those pregnant pauses to reflect, review, and choose wisely. Along with the breath came the sound, and with our sound our unique stamp and resonance was born. Our individual vibration that came through our vocal chords, that was heard in our screams and our cries and our giggles and our moans. The sound is the Word that so many speak of. The entering into creation, the formless into form. And we moved with little wiggles and crawls and shakings. This movement propelled us to our feet, to run and jump and sometimes to hide. Even those of you born without the use of your limbs, or use of your voices, have an innate resonance that pulsates throughout the invisible. The movement is still happening in your lifeblood and in your cells dancing, pumping back and forth, singing the song of creation. In this song your breath always remains. And if your breath stops you stop. If your breath ceases, you cease to be. Of course, I'm not talking esoterically. Of course, there is always the Mystery of eternity and what lies beyond and beyond the beyond. Yet as long as you are here in stewarding your body, your temple of flesh, your breath, sound and movement are the keys to our ecstasy your expression, your purpose and your ability to be present and in Love.

The three precepts I spoke of earlier, Still your Mind, Handle Your Psychology and Awaken Your Body, are inherently dependent on the three jewels of breath, sound and movement.

- Still the Mind

We all have heard various descriptions about the mind, such as, “monkey mind”, “it makes a wonderful slave but a lousy master”, “the mind is like a bad neighborhood, it’s okay to drive through but don’t park your car and get out”, etc. Why are these anecdotes so prevalent? What is the mind? Where is it located in time and space? Are mind and consciousness the same? What is the relationship between our thoughts and emotions? Is “mind” singular or is everything collective consciousness? These are some inquiries that can take you down the rabbit hole. However, these are mostly hypothetical questions and can become a distraction to realizing your Simple Brilliance.

Stilling our mind is more than relaxation; it is a doorway to access our intuition, our Truth, our authentic nature. It propels us into re-membling a Beingness that expresses eternity.

I first discovered this when I was about twelve years old. I was at a three-week sleep over summer camp and during that time period of the early 1970’s many of the camp counselors were practicing meditation. My counselor, (I never knew his real name, we called him Sparky, wore wire rim glasses, had frizzy electric hair long past his shoulders and spoke in a quiet yet excited manner), took us on short hikes and taught us how to sit still in nature, slow our breath, listen and witness the closest and furthest sounds we heard and in general become in union with the earth and the cosmos. I owe a great deal to this man for initiating me into the practice of meditation and setting me on my way to discovering the beauty of the inner and outer landscape. Since then, I have continued to use conscious breathing as a tool to live in the present, reduce stress, tap my creative reservoir, gain access to supreme intelligence, and experience Life being fully related to others, the earth and the multi-verse.

I find that what naturally occurs when breathing deeply and effortlessly, filling the entire lungs up, extending the belly, is that eventually, naturally, a yawn occurs, a yawn from our depths that is an automatic de-stress and integration function. Usually a sound, a sigh accompanies this yawn. As you continue breathing and making that sigh, that sound, it will start resonating through your body. Pay attention to where you feel it; in your mask, your face, your throat, your chest... Do your best to place the sound as low in your body as possible. I find the sound is like an inner massage when we discover our core resonance. All the cells in your body respond and vibrate and release.

Whether you are shy or introverted, attempt to sing. It doesn’t matter what you sing, your favorite song, one that pops in that expresses this moment, a nursery rhyme. I find that singing shuts the mind chatter off and helps us to still it. The contrast between sound and silence becomes more prevalent. When we stop sighing, sounding or singing the contrast amplifies the silence. You will notice your ears acute and your mind quiet.

I have been using sound my entire life. My mother told me that I sang before I spoke. So singing has been natural for me. I went on to sing throughout my life and learned to compose and received a scholarship and degree in voice. This has been my way, my passion. I discovered when I was a child that if I sang with intention, or played the piano, that I could influence my outer world with it. I remember playing piano as a teen when there was tension in my household, and since I had already been studying the esoteric nature of music, I consciously played specific harmonies and intervals. I watched as the majority of the time it would bring peace and equilibrium.

Singing is a core, heartfelt expression that has been used in ritual and ceremony for millennia in earth-based cultures as a means to commune with nature and travel the inner dimensions. Shamanically, if you will, we all have the ability to “Sing Your Dream Awake.”

I teach a workshop entitled this very thing, “Singing Your Dream Awake.” Within that container we use breath, sound and movement, along with our intention to discover our true purpose, passion, and authentic nature. Using breath, sound and movement we can facilitate the manifestation of our life. We begin to resonate our bodies, cells and molecules to become conscious co-creators with the ultimate intelligence of the Universe. This gives a profound experience of our connection with Life itself in all of the multitude of dimensions and grounds this expression into physical reality.

Movement is another method to still the mind; sports, dancing, hiking, martial arts, Thai Chi, making love... Eventually the mind chatter stills. Osho spoke of our thoughts as clouds passing by, and that we are the sky, eternal and unwavering. I would like to add that even though there are cloudy days, the blueness always remains after the rains.

Movement entices a kinesthetic memory of joy. As children we liked to run, to jump, to skip. As infants we were rocked and swayed and that brought us delight. Many years ago I attended a lecture by noted lymphologist Dr. Samuel West. He was a proponent of using a mini trampoline, which he called the lymphosizer. He stated that as children when we were rocked it moved the lymph fluid back and forth and cleaned the body and boosted the immune system. Movement that causes deep breathing, or swaying, any activity that moves the lymph fluid, helps detoxify our bodies, and in turn helps our state of mind, allowing more joy and increasing our capacity to Love.

The next precept is:

- ***Handling Our Psychology***

The term Psyche, apart from her archetype in the Greek myth of Eros and Psyche means the spirit or soul. In Psychiatry the definition refers to the mind functioning as the center of thought, emotion, and behavior and consciously or unconsciously adjusting or mediating the body's responses to the social and physical environment. Though I do not wholly agree with this definition as it excludes the new research of the intelligence of the

heart, it gives us the platform to speak about the need for discovering the role that our psyches play in determining the quality of our life and the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

The notion of seeing a therapist is left for when we are feeling neurotic. Handling our psychology is imperative in living our true authentic nature. From the moment we are born, our bodies and our minds are like sponges, absorbing all that the external and collective unconscious has to offer. Our likes and dislikes, opinions, patterned behaviors, our reactions, our beliefs start forming from our first breath. So much of who we are is bound to our cultural programming and constraints. This is neither good nor bad, the important thing to assess is if we experience life from a sense of freedom. Freedom is gained by looking into our psyches and unraveling the mysteries that lurk beneath our behavior. It doesn't need to be a serious and disempowering experience. Quite the opposite, it can be intriguing, joyful, eye opening and awe inspiring to discover the myths, stories and thoughts that were inherited or of our own creation. How often do we behave with automatic responses and don't even question why they are apart of our makeup, even if they cause others and ourselves pain.. These questions are important to answer.

Some questions are more powerful left unanswered and the inquiry becomes the vehicle for growth, such as the question "Who am I? This is an inquiry that is holographic and leads us down a rabbit hole of many self-reflective mirrors. Eventually there is only one solution, a mind stills and there is a knowing, "I am that."

Other questions are vital to our well-Being such as, what beliefs are my own and which have I inherited from my family and culture? What are my stories about relationship, money, and sex that operate in the background of my entire life, where I have no freedom to choose other than what those stories dictate? So much of our lives are about seeking comfort, avoiding conflict. In solely seeking comfort we are living in a half-asleep state. So many of my relationships in life were predicated on wounds that occurred during my childhood. I was so enmeshed in them, waiting to be abandoned, so wanting approval, so aching to be good enough. These thoughts and the emotions that have attached themselves to them are simply energies stuck in our bodies. They are electrical impulses that have formed repeated pathways in our human circuitry. Our bodies are like a vintage pinball machine with bumpers of condensed, historical energy and every time a new shiny silver pure ball of experience flips into us it gets careened off the bumpers of our past. When this happens enough times we go into to tilt; i.e. aches and pains, depression and dis-ease.

The blessing is that the body responds so beautifully to our consciousness that we can dissolve and release all that doesn't serve us any longer and begin anew with a newfound strength.

When I was a child, teen and young adult I was not able to have a healthy relationship due to my reactions of abandonment, approval and not being good enough. My life was based on compensatory behavior for my imaginative shortcomings and fears learned from the past. Eventually, my unhappiness and lack of self-esteem and self-worth debilitated

me and stole the joy from my life. The meditation I had practiced since I was a child failed me, my metaphysical multi-dimensional experiences became meaningless, and nothing that was familiar could buoy me up as my foundation crumbled. I was twenty-three, just graduated college, ended a disastrous relationship with a much older woman, was exhausted, faithless and afraid. The hospital gave me an injection of Valium and sent me home. It had no affect. I found myself in the office of my first therapist, who was also a metaphysician. I was shaking, disassociated, and perched straddling the veil between physical and non-physical reality. There was immense energy coursing up my spine, through every limb, I was seeing colors and my emotions were erratic and unpredictable. He understood my spiritual emergency, and had the skill to help me to understand it. This was an opportunity, an initiation that was a gift I had given myself. We used sound and chant to reduce the energy flow in my body and we began to unravel the dynamic of my family system and how it contributed to my inability to function in the world. I learned to appreciate the mundane, the simple everyday things, the small steps and see the beauty in them. This was the beginning of my conscious commitment to live a life of freedom, integrity and service.

One of my challenges was discovering a new relationship with my muse. Music had always been a part of my life, yet now I didn't know who I was with it. My art had been so enmeshed with seeking approval and getting attention that, free from that, I felt uninspired without the anguish and pain to fuel my creativity. It wasn't long before my passion for the healing role that music can play in the transformative process arose. I began to study the mystic music practices of various cultures and folk music throughout the world. Simultaneously I became adept at using synthesizers to create sounds for altering consciousness. I also rediscovered my natural voice and began to use these tones as a healing modality with others. My muse had been set free, unfettered by the constraints of my debilitating self-destructive story. Breath, sound and movement all played a vital role in re-awakening my natural talent and inspiring a new enthusiasm as a musician. Rather than my art being fueled by unmet childhood needs, it was now being fanned by the flames of service and how my music could help bring a ripple of peace to the world.

There are many ways to handle our psychology, not only therapy, but friends and mentors, sitting quietly in nature by the ocean, by a mountain stream or in the desert. Observing and developing the witness to your thoughts and your behavior is an important skill to learn. It gives you a slight degree of separation from your automatic responses, allowing you to pause and shift your perception. You then, from a position of clarity, have the power to choose consciously. If you take thirty seconds before you act, whether it be a blaming comment to someone, lighting a cigarette, violent tendencies or a second helping of chocolate cake, and ask yourself if your actions are serving yourself, others and good for the whole, you might find yourself responding differently. It gives us a momentary reprieve to discover whether there is something behind your impulse that is wanting and needing your attention. It gives you an opportunity to reveal the hidden motivations and to change them. This is the fine distinction between responding and reacting and a key to living in connection and Oneness.

When life seems overwhelming to me, when I want to run, go numb or shut down, I breathe. I stop everything and use my breath and make sound, even if it's a sigh or a hum. I have a conversation with "God", I write, I hike, I hold myself. Using breath, sound and movement I calm myself, and allow space to remind me that everything is okay. This empowers my faith and belief in life that I can trust the process of healing.

If we can trust the process of the energy moving through our bodies and the thoughts and emotions that arise, that trust will take us to freedom and that freedom will lead us into the fields of joy and that joy will blossom into a Love never ending.

Part of handling our psychology is the recognition that our belief that we are in control is a complete and utter illusion. We can try to rationalize and be practical, however, this doesn't change the fact that Life is completely unpredictable. It is rife with possibilities that exist outside of the probable. Change is imminent, the seasons come and go. We can realize that we don't need to be in control, that we will survive and that our true nature has an intelligence that can guide us to the healthiest situations. If we can trust that which is greater than ourselves, which truly is our most conscious self, we can let go of needing to be in control. There is a Divine intelligence that is ever present and constantly informing us which "right" actions are the purest expressions of our authentic Self.

I want to share with you a meditation I was given this by my mentor Greg Ehmke. It's an Indonesian practice called Latihan. Generally it is handed down from one initiate to another, however, I have found that simply Being still with the Universe and asking can entice the energy to fill us up and radiate peace and joy.

Leonard Priestly states, "When a person has been "opened" has begun to receive the action of the latihan, the manifestations of the Power of the latihan will begin to emerge, often subtly and even imperceptibly, but occasionally with bold intention. Like physical exercise, the latihan is most beneficial when practiced regularly and in moderation, neither casually nor fanatically. Then its influence can radiate through our life, making itself felt not only in the sense of calm and well-being that we normally enjoy after each latihan, but also as a guiding presence in the midst of our daily activities. And as the years pass, we find more and more that the Power of the latihan within us can bring peace and healing to those around us, as long as we manage not to impede it with our personal preoccupations and reactions."

Latihan is a practice that can help you embody Divine intelligence. It requires you to be still, very still. You may need to traverse your way through impatience and boredom. In this meditation you may confront your sense of Self that thinks it is in control. Latihan allows the impulse of the Universe to take your body over, take your energies over and express Itself.

I was given latihan standing up with a group of others. We stood motionless, perfectly still until Life itself moved us. I found myself acutely aware of whether "I" was moving myself or something other than the "I". If I was moving a finger I could clearly discern if I was moving the finger and, if so, I went back to being still. Eventually a profound

experience occurred. The energy swept through my body. I was suddenly jumping around the room as if I was a Kung Fu master. I was kicking and chopping and whirling about. I was running headlong into a plate glass window, stopping abruptly, throwing an energy ball to the top of the mountain and feeling it thrown back at me as I caught it. I was overcome with a sense of animation that I had never felt. Suddenly, it just stopped and I was perfectly still again. I had no idea of what had occurred.

Since then almost every morning I practice this. It isn't as dynamic and unrelenting as this first experience yet I am left filled with peace, joy and inspiration. If I have appointments to keep I wake up early enough for the latihan. It is one of the few practices that I cherish and it has become part of my daily transition from sleep to awake. I lay still with my eyes closed. I watch my thoughts of the new day move past. I breathe deep and sigh. I observe the tendency to jump up quickly and start the day out of habit, and lie still. I allow the impulse of life to fill me and when ready, I flow naturally into the day with little effort and anxiety. It's as if I am lifted out of bed by a benevolent force of the cosmos. In this way I find myself starting my day in harmony with Nature. I am calm and relaxed and my stride and actions are in synchrony with the energies of the day and my surroundings.

This particular practice is a wonderful segue into our next precept:

- Awakening the Body

We cannot speak about awakening our consciousness without also speaking about waking up our bodies. Our bodies have intelligence, they are informants, they contain cellular memory of the past, they contain massive chemical responses and reactions to our environment. Our bodies are a key to the gates of consciousness and perception, doorways to realities of the multi-verse. If you take a moment to focus on your feet, notice if you are able to feel them, each toe, is it an easy *feat* {-: for you? There is a distinct separation than has occurred in our culture from our disconnection with the Earth, from the cycles and seasons, from not having a relationship with plants and our own wildness and the wildness of nature. It's amazing that we can spend our entire lives in our bodies and be unacquainted with them. There has been a split between our minds and our bodies. You have heard the term being in our head. What that means is that we have allowed our need to "figure" reality out and control, plan and seduce our circumstances and thus we live in a constant state of fear, we have run away in many instances into the caves of our intellect. Our minds ARE wonderful tools when needed and as the proverb says, "Our mind is like a steal trap, what ever goes in, Wham!, it's hard to get out," or "Go out of our minds and come to our senses" Being sequestered in our minds divorces us from our surroundings; our thoughts, emotions, judgments and opinions begin to take precedence over the present experience of Life. Take a moment in your next conversation and notice if you are attentively listening to the other person(s) or if you are a step ahead and formulating responses to them, or judging what they are saying, if so, see if you can witness this and then still the mind and listen from a place of emptiness. See how this feels. Is your experience different? Do you feel closer and more understanding of the person with whom you are speaking?

This will show you how active your mind is and how that activity distracts you from being conscious of the role your body plays, how your body is informing you constantly if your actions are “right” actions in tune with your authentic natural self. Your body gives you aches and pains, sometimes more severe dis-ease, at times subtle twinges, or images and dreams and ripples of energy. There are any number of ways that your body informs you as to your state of Being, if you are aligned with your innate passions and inherent integrity; integrity in the truest sense of the word. Is your life integral, integrated? Are you whole unto your Self?

Breath, sound and movement are integral and primary tools to help awaken your body. Your throat and the sounds it makes are powerful tools to experience body/mind integration. Throughout time our ancestors have used song and dance as a means to deeply connect to the origins of their creativity. Many of us have simply forgotten. Each of us has our own sacred sounds, rhythm and movements that are uniquely our own. These are intuitive keys, beyond the mind’s chatter, that can unleash the Soulful purpose and essence of your life. These are innate forms of expression, powerful and ancient, most of all simple, that are catalysts to fulfilling your passion and dreams.

Awakening in your body involves more than physical activity, such as exercise, sports, manual labor, sex. It involves giving conscious attention to your body during these activities. Then, quite naturally, we can summon this state of Being. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (pronounced chick-sent-me-high-ee), in his many books on this subject, examines the nature of, what he aptly calls, “living in the flow.”

One of the most phenomenal ways of awakening your body is through your sexuality, whether it is through self-pleasuring or with single or multiple partners. I’m not speaking of irresponsible, addictive sex, I’m addressing the fact that the energy that moves through your body is inherently orgasmic, that you were born from an orgasmic experience, and to attempt to repress and subdue the beautiful gifts of ecstasy that Life gives you is not only unhealthy, but causes many of the stressful symptoms we witness in our relationships, economy and culture. Our relationships with each other and our cultural attitudes about sexuality often completely forget about the sacred and spiritual nature of our bodies. If you look at the breakdown of the nuclear family, the extraordinarily high divorce rate, the number of men, women and children who are raped and/or abused, our culture is seriously in need of a shift in consciousness about our bodies and our sexual nature.

Historically, if you look at the destruction of Neolithic society and matrifocal communities and the ensuing patriarchal take over, the fear that was prevalent amongst domineering men, and still is, of the depth and power of the female orgasmic experience, continues to cause extremely dysfunctional families. You see, what has occurred is that the way the patriarchy was designed it has inoculated men with the thoughts that we are the providers; our value is based on the money we earn. This has created so much pressure that we see it manifested in the viciousness of war, pollution and disregard for the feminine. Disregard not only for the feminine in the form of women, but also out of

touch with the gentler fatherly side of themselves. Sex becomes aggressive, brutal and sometimes destructive, and on a lighter note just plain unfulfilling and empty. Re-storing this balance within ourselves simply takes a commitment and intention to break the pattern. By making concerted efforts to awaken our bodies consciously and behave non-violently towards each other, we have an opportunity for intimacy and connection that can elicit immediate results and aid in the mending of thousands of years of physical and psychological imprisonment.

Understand that the animating force of the Universe is simply energy, not good or bad energy, unencumbered primordial energy. Your ecstatic nature, your orgasmic nature, however expressed through your creativity, can cause you to ripple with vibration, shake, shimmer and have your perceptions enhanced. You can experience a union, a connection with all of humanity. This leads to more confidence, joy and peace of mind. The result being the unleashing of dormant creative forces that can be powerfully directed into ones life purpose.

One of the simplest models to awaken the body is called the Yoga Nidra. I learned this type of awareness, as I mentioned earlier, when I was a youngster at camp. There was no specific name given to me at that time of what the practice was called, however, it was something I found extremely effective and still do.

Yoga Nidra means Yogic Sleep. It is a state of conscious Deep Sleep. In Meditation, you remain in the Waking state of consciousness and gently focus the mind, while allowing thought patterns, emotions, sensations, and images to arise and go on. However, in Yoga Nidra, you *leave* the Waking state, go *past* the Dreaming state, and go to Deep Sleep, yet remain awake. Yoga Nidra brings access to the to latent, or subconscious level of mind, that is underneath even the processing, fantasizing, imaging level of mind. This state is the *state* of Yoga Nidra (Yoga Nidra refers to a *state* of consciousness, not just the methods that *lead* you there).

I begin this practice by taking a few deep inhalations and exhaling with an audible sigh. I keep this going through the entire practice until I move into silent meditation. Placing my entire attention on one side of my body, I focus digit-by-digit, hand, wrist, arm, waist, leg, foot, toes and then I do the other side. I proceed and focus on the sacrum, lower back, middle and upper back, neck, back of head, top of head and forehead. I then place my attention on each eye brow and middle brow, or third eye, eye balls, eye lids, ears, cheeks, nose, tip of nose, upper and lower lip, the space between my lips, chin, throat, etc. on down through my body. I have recorded this for you in my CD titled Stillpoint. It also contains breath exercises to assist you in going even deeper into your consciousness and open up energetic meridians in your body.

When we awaken our body we have gained access to the root of our emotional Being. If there is stuck energy in the body as we awaken it, the energy can be released. As our bodies awaken we find ourselves remembering aspects of our past, experiencing powerful emotions. It is important that this is one of the ways your body lets go and leads you to freedom. Herring's Law of Cure states the cure is from above downwards, from within

outwards, from major organs to minor organs, and symptoms will disappear in reverse order to their appearance (i.e. the first symptoms to appear will be the last to go). This last part is what is most applicable to the emotional release process.

There has been a war waged with the body for several thousand years. We have come to believe, often through our religious upbringing, that our bodies are adversaries and the culture has demonized them. The truth is, our bodies are our temples; they are the vehicles with which we have been born with to experience all of Life and to experience each other. Our bodies are to be celebrated, and in this celebration abuse falls to the wayside because there is an acceptance of our human condition within the body. When the repression that causes depression lifts, when we alter our beliefs and begin to fully embody ourselves, we then have the ability to manifest joyfully the full expression of our short time here on earth.

The Way of the Open Heart is synonymous with freedom. Living a Life of authenticity, integrity and wholeness. Know that your unique gifts have a profound and lasting inspiration that can transform not only your immediate relations, but also long after your time here is completed. We all leave a legacy and everyday we have an opportunity to determine what that legacy will be.
will be.