

## Lesson 44: What Does Personal and Spiritual Growth Mean?

As we strive to understand the nature of our personal reality we become more aware of the underlying and most often undetected mental and emotional issues that affected our realities and hindered our personal and spiritual growth. Although we were not necessarily aware of the issues that were hidden beneath the surface of our conscious awareness, we were very aware of the fact that there were certain obstacles that kept us from pursuing our ideals which would have resulted in the realization of our dreams and the achievement of our goals. But as these issues were brought into the light and we learned how to overcome the obstacles, we found that the challenge of accepting them as the truths of our personal realities were well worth the mental and emotional anguish it took to arrive there. Even more surprising is the discovery that these obtrusive obstacles actually held the keys to our personal and spiritual growth. But as liberating as it is to be freed from the obstacles that stood in the way of our personal pursuits there is another aspect of our personal and spiritual growth that we must take into consideration. The lesson will examine this aspect of personal and spiritual growth from a framework that we are not ordinarily accustomed to viewing it from. Addressing the topic in this manner is for the purpose of provoking a deeper meaning and significance to the purpose and existence of human life other than the pursuit of our individual ideals.

There is a lot of talk these days about the matter of conscious awareness not just in terms of its spiritual implications but also in terms of its scientific implications. The matter of conscious awareness had previously been relegated to the speculations of philosophy and metaphysics; however, various fields of science have seen fit to address these matters as well, thus the waking of consciousness as we know it today includes a scientific perspective as well as a spiritual perspective. Many sources have attributed the awakening of a higher level of conscious awareness to the Harmonic Convergence which was said to be the first world-wide intention event. This global landmark event was celebrated at sunrise on August 16, 17 and 18 back in 1987. It was described as the first ever global co-ordinated link-up of human consciousness that focused on peace and love through the power of intention. It is also said that the powerful thought-energy generated during the event created the matrix for many of the sudden, dramatic and otherwise inexplicable changes witnessed in the years following the event. Since then there has been a slow and steady progression of old paradigms collapsing under the weight of a new way of thinking that is not focused on materialism and greed but is focused on what is good for the whole rather than what is good only for certain individuals or organizations. The evidence speaks for itself in the most recent flow of political woes being heard in Washington from the voices of the Occupy Wall Street demonstrators who, on behalf of all Americans, are demanding relief of economic inequality caused by corporate greed, and whose aggressions are being vented toward the inexcusable corruption that has come to define Wall Street. While this greed driven

house of cards is falling in on itself, it proves the age-old axiom that a house divided against itself cannot stand. While that house is comprised of corporate and individual greed it is nevertheless the affect of human consciousness lacking in moral and spiritual values along with the unscrupulous principles it adheres to that it causing it to divide against itself.

Thankfully we are in the midst of a significant era, marked by the advent of the year 2012, in which conscious awakening in terms of personal growth and spirituality is said to peak. This awakening is not attributed to a New Age or pop culture movement but is the continuation of a divine plan that has been underway all throughout the history of human evolution and is not religious in nature. The fundamentals and principles of spirituality were passed down to us from the ancient masters, sages, shamans and teachers and have indeed stood the test of time. These fundamentals and principles are clearly evident in the spiritual teachings of Jesus in the New Testament, from the Buddha who taught the karmic principles of living righteously, from the Bhagavad Gita which focused on the importance of overcoming the lusts of the flesh and from other Eastern cultures, such as Taoism and Hinduism. As the Eastern religions reached the Western shorelines many classics were written by noted authors and poets who had tapped into the fundamentals of these ancient cultures. Consequently, they opened up the floodgates to higher levels of spirituality and personal growth. These noted authors and poets included the likes of the American psychologist and philosopher William James, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bertrand Russell, John Dewey, Mark Twain, Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, just to name a few. However, the progression of personal and spiritual growth was slowed down in the eighties by the human desire for materialism that was generated by greed, which at that time preceded any desires for personal and spiritual growth. At the same time classical Newtonian mechanics was providing the scientific groundwork for humans to embrace an attitude of “I” rather than “We” which inevitably lead to a sense of human isolation from the whole of the race. We were essentially cut off from one another as if we were all separate individuals experiencing separate lives to the degree that no one other than the self mattered and no one was really affected by the choices and decisions we made as individuals. Consequently, we became isolated individuals living in what appeared to be an isolated universe where it appeared that nothing and no one was connected or interconnected in any manner of speaking.

The twentieth century ushered in the advent of quantum physics which allowed physicists to peer below the macroscopic Newtonian building blocks of the universe into the microscopic levels of the atom and even lower into the subatomic particles. As quantum physics began unfolding the microscopic nature of reality, physicists began to realize that the universe was not at all isolated but that everything in existence was, in fact, connected and interconnected to one another in a “complex dynamic network of highly organized and organizing fields of force” including human beings, and that our

intended thoughts really do affect our realities. Physicists refer to this interconnection of everything that exists as being “entangled.” This revelation inspired scientists and researchers from other fields of science to begin investigating the nature of reality in terms of the role consciousness plays in this entangled universe. More importantly is that as science strives to empirically prove philosophical and metaphysical speculations about the nature of reality it is finding it more difficult to eliminate spirituality from its scientific findings. No matter how scientists choose to throw the dice in regard to evolution and the creation of the universe, they just can’t seem to put all the pieces together without the admission of the possibility of the presence of a higher intelligence responsible for the origins of the universe. This master designer that most of the world’s religions refer to as God, the Creator, the All That Is, or a higher power is not being eliminated out of the scientific equations but is becoming more accepted as possibly being the energy or the master mind behind the creation of the universe – that perhaps God does exist in some form. While scientists have not yet been able to identify exactly what this supreme intelligence is many scientists are keeping an open mind as they strive to understand the nature of reality and the nature of being. In spite of the split between the scientific mindsets in regard to the origins of the universe as either being attributed to Darwin’s natural selection, survival of the fittest and random mutation or the mindset of an intelligent design universe, no one has yet to define exactly what that word “origin” really means in scientific terms. This begs such questions as who or what is behind the origin and the organization of the laws that govern high-order biological systems, including the evolution and intelligence of life.

A walk through the titles of many of the popular books that describe the extensive research being conducted by today’s noted scientists and researchers in regard to the understanding of consciousness, what is it, where does it come from, how does it unite us in terms of being entangled and how does intention, aka thought-energy, change our reality individually and globally, speaks to the prevailing desire of the human mind to discover its spiritual origins. The results of the extensive research that was conducted over the past thirty years or more and is being conducted in labs and research centers all around the world today has adequately proven the benefits of personal and spiritual growth that begins at the level of the individual and extends outward and that contains within it the power to heal and change adverse realities. Concurrently, these personal and spiritual expansions are slowly beginning to affect the longevity of outdated paradigms all across the board which includes and is not limited to governmental policies, world peace, equality and respect for every human being as well as the outdated religious dogmas and doctrines that were founded on the need for control, power and wealth, enforced by instilling fear and false guilt.

The human desire, as it relates to its lack of personal and spiritual growth, are defined as being reliant and often addicted to sensory and intellectual stimuli that cause strong emotional vacillations; the result of our ego-minds being untrained and our emotions

being out of balance. As a race we fail to cultivate such positive attributes as confidence, effort, mindfulness, understanding and concentration. These attributes are similar to the attributes the Buddha exemplified in his Eightfold Path which are right action, right attention, right effort, right meditation, right occupation, right purpose, right speech and right understanding. These same Buddhist attributes were also exemplified in the collections of the ancient Indian books of spirituality that were handed down to us from the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and the Dhammapada. The Dhammapada is known as “the path of the dharma” which is the path of harmony and righteousness. These positive attributes or qualities support a lifestyle that nurtures the cultivation of the mind rather than undermining its capabilities, especially in terms of its creative expression. Both the Buddha and Jesus taught the importance of devoting oneself to developing a conduct that serves the well-being of not just oneself but others as well. To selfishly consider only the well-being of oneself is to provoke the natural consequences of cause and effect that occurs when the mind is not spiritually cultivated but is focused on greed and lust. To experience a state of spiritual well-being is to master the art of being mentally and emotionally balanced which is conducive to a more natural state of happiness and contentment as opposed to succumbing to the human cravings such as the lust for materialism, wealth and power which then leads to greed, hostility, anxiety and even depression. Now this is not to say that the acquisition of wealth and materialism is wrong, it becomes a negative karmic issue when such acquisitions are gained through an attitude of greed and selfishness.

Without some means of insight into the nature of the realities we create by our thoughts, beliefs and perceptions, we have no sure path to direct and relevant self-knowledge. Without this kind of insight we forego the benefits that come from the experience of self-discovery which is reciprocal in that the truths we learn about ourselves and the affects of those truths on our behaviors, feelings and emotions directly influences the quality of our lives. Additionally, the insights acquired from a period of self-discovery inevitably inhibits the desire to lust after anything and when this self-knowledge is applied to day to day living it supports a healthy balance of wants, needs and desires. Not to mention it puts the matters of life, including the emotion of love, in its proper perspective which eliminates negative and non-conducive perceptions that result from disabling beliefs and limited thinking. Given that our perceptions are strongly influenced by our emotional memories and our preconceptions they often lead us straight into the path of unrealistic expectations that usually ends up being painfully deflated sooner or later.

As science strives to understand the nature of reality, the nature of the universe as well as the nature and the power of consciousness, science and spirituality are indeed becoming two sides of the same coin. As these two very separate and distinct fields of inquiry, knowledge and understanding become more and more enmeshed, the pursuit of personal and spiritual growth is necessary in order to contribute to the overall

progression of our evolution as individuals and as a collective whole. And as we strive to understand the nature of our personal realities, how we create our realities and the intervention in the lives of others by our intended thoughts, actions and reactions we not only improve the quality of our own lives but we affect the quality of life globally speaking. Personal and spiritual growth is, after all, the result of the growth and development of the whole person.

There is a vast movement, an undercurrent, of people who are being beckoned to grow personally and spiritually so that they can become beacons of light or light workers not just for the good of their individual well-being but for the good of the whole. They are on a quest and they are looking for personal and spiritual growth outside of their churches, temples and synagogues. They are seeking enlightenment and they are finding their way to spiritual and metaphysical websites, such as The Dragon of Drama and countless others, where the truth about their realities is being told and where they are being encouraged to embark on their own journey of self-discovery. Although the need to prove or disprove spirituality has risen to the forefront in many fields of scientific explorations and as the supporting evidence of spirituality as well as the paranormal experiences of thousands of people mounts we find that are now relying on metaphysics, mysticism and the various fields of sciences to explain the physical and emotional affects of spirituality rather than traditional religion. Science has even seen fit to, in some cases, take over the reins of metaphysics and mysticism in their quest to empirically prove the nature of reality and the nature of being. Needless to say, this is an exciting time in scientific exploration.

Although the pursuit of greed and materialism still runs rampant in the mindsets of certain sects of people and organizations, nonetheless, there is a slow and steady movement away from greed and materialism as science closes in on proving spirituality and aligns itself with the growing evidence of the paranormal. Without a doubt this is truly an indication of our spiritual nature in its relationship to telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, psychokinesis and psychic healing. As the evidence of these paranormal activities continues to stack up in scientific research and experiments, materialism and the need for the accumulation of it from a selfish perspective is slowly becoming a thing of the past as we connect more and more with the spiritual world. As people continue in their quest to learn how to link up to the spiritual world, via dreams and meditations, OBE's (out of body experiences), astral travel and even the accounts of NDE's (near death experiences) the desire for materialism and other forms of selfish greed are less appealing. Regardless of how you arrive at the position of your personal and spiritual growth one thing is for certain, you cannot grow personally and spiritually without your mind and your emotions in a state of balance, and certainly not without effort and concentration.

So as we embark on a global shift of conscious awareness, and as we move toward a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world we live in, the evidence can be found in the ultimate transformation of humanity; a feat traditional religion could not live up to. But this kind of world-wide movement cannot continue to expand without our commitment to step outside of our comfort zones and to realize that there is something out there beyond the horizon that is not dependent on the experiences of our five senses but is dependent on our personal and spiritual growth. The Indian author, Eknath Easwaran, and translator of the Dhammapada best describes the spirit of humanity as that *“we are meant to explore, to seek, to push the limits of our potential as human beings. The world of the senses is just a base camp; we are meant to be as much at home in consciousness as in the world of physical reality.”*

In closing we hope that our attempt to elevate your conscious awareness of what personal and spiritual growth means by addressing the matter from a more comprehensive and somewhat scientific approach has indeed provoked within you a deeper meaning for the purpose and the existence of human life. As always, should you have any questions or would like to share your own thoughts and experiences, please feel free to contact me at the email address below.

Many Blessings,  
Linda, Z and the Collective We

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### **Resources & Recommended Reading:**

A Spiritual Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Universe, Paul Rademacher

Beyond Cosmic Dice, Jeff Schweitzer

Embracing Mind, Brian Hodel and B. Alan Wallace

Fingerprints of God, Barbara Bradley Hagerty

Global Shift, Edmund J. Bourne

Hidden Dimensions, B. Alan Wallace

Intelligent Evolution, Gary E. Schwartz

In the Buddha’s Words, Bhikkhu Bodhi

Psychic Exploration, Edgar D. Mitchell, ScD, PhD

The Dhammapada, Eknath Easwaran

The End of Materialism, Charles T. Tart, PhD

The Huffington Post, Occupy Wall Street Only Scratches the Surface, Jeff Schweitzer

The G.O.D Experiments, Gary E. Schwartz

The Institute of Noetic Science: <http://noetic.org>.