



HAPPY
BIRTHDAY

Shalom

February 2008

First Anniversary Edition

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"When you squeeze an orange, orange juice comes out -- because that's what's inside. When you are squeezed, what comes out is what is inside." (Dr. Wayne W. Dyer)

In this Issue

Editorial

What Matters is not Matter

Give it a Listen!

General Info.

From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

I just cannot believe we're bringing out the *First Anniversary Edition* of **Shalom**! But it's true! *Happy Birthday Shalom*! You're now 1-year-old!

Those among my sweet readers who have been with me right from the first issue of this e-zine might recall that I'd written here in Feb. 2007 that we kick off with the first issue not knowing whatever will be the destiny of this humble publication, that I'm like the pen in the hands of the divinely talented Writer or the receptive football at the strong purposeful feet of the omniscient Athlete! I am still the same.

I just could not have done this without each one of you on my side and your warm love that you have always sent me in return for the issues. To share our joy with you all, we are giving you two gifts –

one is an exclusive interview with Dan Joseph and the other is our own 24 / 7 inspirational talk radio station! The first test broadcast of our radio station, **SPIRIT IMPRINTS RADIO: "FOOD FOR YOUR SOUL"**, went on air on Jan. 29, 2008 at approx. 2: 30 AM IST. The station has been launched globally in cyberspace. We invite each one of you to tune in to our Live 24 / 7 CD Quality Streaming Broadcast right now by clicking on the following link: (64 kbps / 44100 KHz/ st mp3PRO): <http://www.live365.com/stations/pramoduday> (This link will take you to our station page. You can launch the player by clicking on the yellow 'Play' button. You may have to get registered in a minute at the site to listen to the streaming broadcast)

As we wrote in our mission statement, "Our objective is to broadcast wholesome programs that are a delectable treat to the one eternal spirit of goodness within all of us." We'll air spiritual music, meditation music, talk shows, news bulletins, drama, documentaries, guided meditations and much more.

Hope we succeed in our noble mission. We are badly in need of your prayers and support and the best way in which you can support us is by simply clicking on the play button! We promise not to disappoint you!

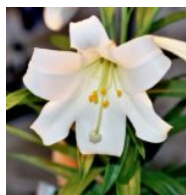
Hoping that you'll stay with us in the coming months and years as we move ahead in our eternal spiritual quest together,

In Love and Light,
Pramod K. Uday
(Editor)
(Feb 10, 2008).



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What Matters is not Matter

(February 2008)

Pramod K. Uday

DAN JOSEPH is the author of *Inspired by Miracles* and *Inner Healing*. Dan's writing has received warm reviews from **Dr. Caroline Myss**, **Hugh Prather**, **Alan Cohen**, and the *Midwest Book Review*. For the past ten years, this author has been writing about the connection between spirituality and psychology. In his work, he frequently draws on themes from *A Course in Miracles*, a program of "spiritual psychotherapy."

On this auspicious occasion, we present this exclusive freewheeling one-on-one with **Dan Joseph**. I wrote to Dan asking if he would be willing to give an interview for the readers of *Shalom*. To be frank, we had no hope, knowing Dan's busy schedule. But to our most pleasant surprise, I must say, Dan said a big "YES" and the result is this interview. We communicated through e-mails and this took us about 2 memorable weeks, give or take a few days. Without further ado, let's see the interview!

"As far as I see it, Divinely-inspired Love, Beauty, and Peace are all facets of the same experience. True love is both beautiful and peaceful; true beauty is both loving and peaceful; true peace is loving and beautiful. Because of this, I believe that any of these experiences can be an entry-point to all of them." –

Dan Joseph

Me: Broadly speaking, we could say that every school of spirituality stresses the importance of "quieting the mind". Why is a quiet mind so very important?

Dan: Good question! I imagine that some people hear the term "quiet mind" and think -- boring! A quiet mind doesn't sound very exciting or

interesting. However, in my experience there is a wonderful thing that happens as we quiet down the habitual thoughts that run through our minds. First we experience a sense of inner peace. That peace is wonderful in and of itself. But then, that inner peace begins to clear the way for new, inspired thoughts to flow through.

Our minds -- now quieted of our habitual thoughts -- become vessels through which new, creative thoughts can flow through us to the world. So the process of quieting our minds isn't an end in and of itself. Rather, it is a step toward opening to a new flow of thoughts. We quiet the anxious, self-critical, or otherwise self-defeating thoughts, and open to a flow of loving, peaceful, inspired thoughts.

Me: *Does quieting the mind necessarily entail "emptying the mind"? Because personally I find emptying the mind an impossible task! How can you empty the mind? Many suggest focusing on breath and not thinking ... but then you might find yourself analyzing the breath, like how long the breaths are, how deep they are, how it feels inside, etc, etc, the very thought I'm not thinking of anything is a thought!*

Dan: Many spiritual paths do talk about emptying the mind of all thoughts, and making the mind "blank." However, as you correctly observe, that's a pretty difficult thing to do!

My goal is simply to empty -- or quiet -- the mind of its old, unpeaceful thoughts in order to make room for the emergence of new, loving thoughts. So the mind doesn't really become "empty" or "blank" in this process. Rather, it releases its old, chaotic thoughts in order to allow for the flow of new, inspired thoughts.

There is a line in *A Course in Miracles* that says, "*The mind is very powerful, and never loses its creative force. It never sleeps. Every instant it is creating.*" So according to that description, the mind is an active instrument. The question is, what do we want to use that active instrument *for*? We can allow the mind to generate unpeaceful thoughts, or allow it to be a conduit for the flow of peaceful, loving thoughts.

As we quiet and release the old, we make room for the emergence of the new.

Me: *Wow! That answer helps a lot. Your monthly newsletter has always brought me so much joy and comfort. I remember reading in a past issue about taking a short one-minute break at the top of every hour to go within and quiet our mind. I personally find this of immense value because one of the main issues that many of us face is that we forget we are now on a new spiritual track, that we have left the noise behind us ... Could you talk more about it?*

Dan: Yes, that is a common practice from the workbook of *A Course in Miracles*. In this practice, we stop for a minute (or even a few seconds) every hour to re-focus and re-center. We take a minute or so to release our old thoughts and open our hearts to a sense of inner peace.

Now, it's fascinating to see how many of us resist this type of practice! (Myself included.) The mind can be funny in this way. It can come up with myriad reasons as to why it's too difficult to stop for a minute every hour. The mind might say: "I'm too busy." "People will think I'm weird." "I'm lazy." "It's already mid-way through the day and I've missed all my practices. Might as well just give up." And so on.

This type of resistance is common. In fact, it's almost to be expected. However, our mind's resistance doesn't need to stop us. We can use any number of helpful reminders to give us gentle but firm support in our efforts. For example, I sometimes set a timer to ring on the hour. Or I set my computer to pop up a reminder. Or I write down a spiritual message where I will periodically see it throughout the day.

Ultimately, though, the most helpful thing might be to remind ourselves that *we're giving a gift to ourselves* by stopping throughout the day and exchanging our habitual thoughts for a sense of peace. Even a few seconds of this can be helpful.

"Many spiritual paths do talk about emptying the mind. However, that's a pretty difficult thing to do! My goal is to simply quiet the mind in order to make room for the emergence of new, loving thoughts. So the mind doesn't really become 'empty' or 'blank' in this process. Rather, it releases its old, chaotic thoughts" – Dan

Me: *In the past two issues you talked about giving and loving and you wrote loving oneself is as important as loving others. I've read and re-read those articles many times by now and they were really thought-provoking. I found myself wondering as I read what really is selfishness then and also how much of self-love may be construed as selfishness*

Dan: These are good (and thought-provoking) questions! You know, that's a really good question. I usually have to ask people what they mean by "selfishness." If "selfishness" means callously ignoring the feelings, requests, and concerns of others -- well, then, that's clearly not helpful.

However, many people feel that self-care and self-respect are somehow "selfish." I say: Not at all! Self-care, self-respect, and self-acceptance actually help us to be *more* caring, respectful, and accepting of others.

The idea here is that the more love we give (to ourselves or others), the more love we will have to give to ourselves *and* others. Giving love multiplies it. The more we give, the more we have left over.

So self-care and self-respect are essential if we want to be caring and respectful to others. We can't give to one side and not the other. As I've written about, many of us spiritually-oriented people tend to "short change" ourselves. We give love to others, while giving criticism and judgment to ourselves.

This doesn't work! To truly be loving, we need to give love to both ourselves and others. This isn't selfish; it's healthy.

Me: *Whoa! Your answers really resonate with my inner truth and thinking! Now may I ask something that is not directly related to your chosen field of spirituality? I refer to the school of manifestation and spiritual co-creation which has been once again brought to the limelight globally by the phenomenal success, **The Secret** movie and book. What's your take on this school of thinking which stresses our role in the creation of everything?*

Dan: I haven't read *The Secret*, and so I can't really comment on it. However, let me share some thoughts about manifestation in general.

To begin, I am sure that most of us tend to underestimate the power of the mind. In the practice of psychotherapy, many of our strategies involve helping clients to recognize the influence of their beliefs, attitudes, and habitual thoughts. The mind is an extraordinarily powerful instrument, and needs to be recognized as such!

Having said that, it's important to choose how to use this power. Can we harness the power of the mind to accumulate wealth and attract romantic partners? Sure. That seems to be the focus of many "manifestation" programs. I'm sure that they work.

However, I question whether this is the ideal use of the mind. A *Course in Miracles* has some excellent insights about this. The Course encourages us to focus our intention and direction on the single goal of *inner healing* -- or, you might say, the experience of Divine Love and the beauty of the Spirit. As we attain this, all else will appear in proper perspective.

There is a line from the Course that says, "The secret of true prayer is to forget the things you think you need." The idea is that we can release our own plans and self-defined needs, and simply open to an experience of Divine Love. That Love can then "echo" throughout our lives in many beautiful ways.

So in this type of "manifestation," we simply open to the ever-present gift of God's Love... and then we let that Love flow through our minds and lives. Quite a different type of manifestation!

Me: *I love that quote! There are many such lines from the Course that I love and bring to mind from time to time, though I've not, I must admit, read the book in its entirety. That reminds of me of something I wanted to ask you. In your eyes, what exactly is the Course about and also how did you come to develop such a beautiful and, let me say, inspiring, association with this book?*

Dan: *A Course in Miracles* has been described as a self-paced program of spiritual psychotherapy. I think that's a good description. The Course is a set of books: a text, a workbook, and a manual. Put simply, it's designed to help us open our hearts and minds to the experience of God's Love.

I certainly don't think that *A Course in Miracles* will appeal to everyone. But for those who relate to it, it can provide a helpful spiritual boost.

As for my own relationship with the Course: When I was in college, I found myself feeling disillusioned with the life path that I was on. I had planned to become a businessman and work on Wall Street. However, after a couple of summer internships in New York, I realized how unfulfilling that environment felt to me.

Back at college during my sophomore year, I began to explore various philosophical and spiritual ideas. I wanted to find my "path." I came across some interesting ideas and philosophies, but none of them seemed to resonate particularly deeply.

Then, one night, I sat down and prayed for guidance. I was exhausted by my search. Was there a spiritual path for me? If so, I really wanted to find it. Immediately the thought came to mind: *check out A Course in Miracles*.

My mother had been studying *A Course in Miracles* for years, and in high school I had read a book inspired by the Course called *Love is Letting Go of Fear*. But for some reason, up until that moment, I hadn't seriously considered opening the Course myself.

I immediately walked down to a local bookstore, and opened up a copy of the Text. Suddenly I felt: *this is it*. It just seemed to resonate with me. That was about eighteen years ago -- and though I study and read many other things, the Course continues to be a great source of inspiration for me.

"A Course in Miracles has been described as a self-paced program of spiritual psychotherapy. I think that's a good description." – Dan

Me: *The Course abounds in allusions to Love, Beauty and Peace. Which of them comes first - Love, Beauty or Peace?*

Dan: That's a very interesting question! As far as I see it, Divinely-inspired Love, Beauty, and Peace are all facets of the same experience. True love is both beautiful and peaceful; true beauty is both loving and peaceful; true peace is loving and beautiful.

Because of this, I believe that *any* of these experiences can be an entry-point to all of them. *A Course in Miracles* frequently encourages us to make inner peace our primary goal. The idea is that along with peace will come all the other experiences we seek -- beauty, love, connection, a sense of empowerment, a sense of worth, and so forth.

At other points, the Course encourages us to open directly to an experience of God's Love. Along with that Love will come everything else that we seek. So I believe that we can focus on any of these Divinely-inspired experiences.

Me: *I've immensely enjoyed this interaction with you and I am really excited about taking the transcript of this chat to my dearest readers. I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your warm words. As a closing word, would you like to say anything to the readers of Shalom?*

Dan: Thanks Pramod! You are a wonderful interviewer, and have asked some very thoughtful questions. I would invite any of your readers to visit my website at <http://www.DanJoseph.com> and take a look at any of my articles there. I cover a range of topics, including the practice of cognitive therapy and other approaches from the field of psychotherapy.

Thanks again for the opportunity to dialogue about these topics. I wish you the best with Shalom!

(Dan invites you to sign up for his free Quiet Mind newsletter at <http://www.danjoseph.com>. I've been a regular reader of this beautiful magazine for more than a year and I highly recommend it to all of you. Also do visit his site and spend some time there. You're not going to regret it!)

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Key Words: Nisargadatta Maharaj, Wayne Dyer, witnessing, compassion, love, proactivity

| Episode # | Size | Duration | File Type | Content Rating | Rights |
|-----------|---------|----------|-----------|----------------|---|
| 12 | 18.7 MB | 0:20:29 | MP3 Audio | General(G)* |  |

(*Suitable to listeners of all ages) (Cover art model: Jared Padalecki)

Show Notes: When we become one with the compassionate Observer within us, we realize in our soul that we are limitless, that we can cure us of any diseases, that no “trouble” can affect us, that we just cannot feel hunger or thirst or tiredness feel we do not want to feel it! Above all, we become fearless. It’s such a relief when we finally get a glimpse of our own eternity! As the Hindu manifestation of God, Krishna, says in the ***Bhavagad Gita***, “Our soul is immortal, eternal, imperishable. Weapons cannot injure it; water cannot wet it; fire cannot burn it; wind cannot dry it.”

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