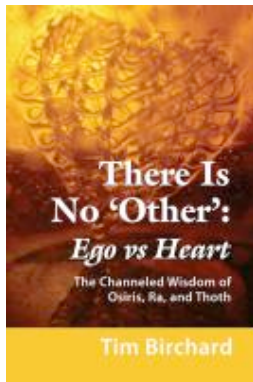


**There Is
No 'Other':**
Ego vs Heart

The Channeled Wisdom of
Osiris, Ra, and Thoth

Tim Birchard



There Is No 'Other' is a no-holds-barred look at recognizing and releasing misperception, revealing the stark contrast between the wisdom of the Heart and the petty, tyrannical demands of the ego. Throughout this book, the channeled energies of Osiris, Ra, and Thoth point to the truth over and over again: what we perceive through human physical senses is not Reality. Reality is love. Love is life. And life is timeless. Your True Identity is timeless.

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The Channeled Wisdom
of
Osiris, Ra, and Thoth

Tim Birchard

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CHAPTER ONE

Foolish cousin ego

Come back here and have a seat next to me. Sit here with me in the sunshine, here in the back yard. Feel the warmth of the sun on your face. Here, have some water. Have some sunshine. Have some lemonade. Have some delicious food. Have some company. Have some quiet time. Rest. Relax. You've been working so hard to find yourself... to take care of things in the way a man of goodness would, and does. You've been striving to do and be the right thing for so long... Sit and rest. Set down those heavy bags. No need to worry: I'll have someone carry them to your room for you. Filled with anxieties and worries and concerns and deadlines and storylines and masks and passwords and keys and backup hard drives and floor mats and extra boots and windbreakers and an emergency sleeping bag and some backup cash for just in case.

You certainly are prepared. Or you seem to believe you are, anyway. Little cousin ego must be whispering in your ear again. Have you been believing his lies? He knows no other way, so we can't really blame him, can we? But as good as his intentions might be, he is misguided, and has misguided you, time and again. He tells you that you had better be prepared; you had better be warned and cautious and on your guard. No place for vulnerability and openness here-- in order to survive, you have absolutely got to grit your teeth and clench your shoulders as you walk, to make yourself look larger and more

threatening to others, who would take advantage of you for walking down the sidewalk in a big, scary town like this. Haven't you heard the latest news? Haven't you memorized the latest crime statistics? Don't you know your very life is in danger?

Yes... foolish cousin ego. He believes his own press, and that's how he can be so utterly charming and convincing. But you've noticed, no doubt, that he can spin on a dime to turn against you, shaming and blaming you for all kinds of things, and then getting you to believe that he's doing it all for your own good. Can you believe that? Would you ever put up with such attitude from anyone on the street? In the classroom? At the grocery store? Just imagine if your checkout clerk at the grocery store was checking out your items and started chastising you for what you were purchasing... what you were wearing, or for humming the tune on your lips. Would you ever tolerate such abuse, such lies, such incredible inhospitality? Of course not. You would talk to the manager, remove yourself from the unhealthy relationship as soon as possible.

So why is it that when this back alley bum starts whispering in your ear with its nasty breath, you immediately invite him to come sit in your lap? When he starts pulling your hair and scratching your face and slapping and pinching you, insults flying, curses spilling all over your favorite shirt, all you can do is thank him for his kindness? When he wipes snot and saliva all over your sleeve, and sneezes in your face, all you can do is congratulate him for being such a good ally?

No. This is not how it was meant to be. The next time your 'kind uncle' sidles up to you, blowing smoke in your face, with food stuck in his teeth and vomit on his breath... the next time he leans in to give you a big kiss on the lips, turn away. Refuse his advances. Don't listen to him. He does not deserve your attention, let alone your acceptance. His game is to pretend that what he thinks is what you think; he whispers something in your ear, and if you repeat it out loud, he congratulates you for having such wonderful ideas. He tells you that you are a smart guy; a man of the world who can tell the difference between fools and heroes.

But trust me when I tell you, he does not have your best interest at heart. In fact, he has you serving him, when it should be the other way around. Long ago he applied for the job of butler, just to help out around the house and get things done. And you were ready for a little help; some guidance would be great, you thought. Better than having to try to make sense of this confusing world all alone. And so you hired him. At minimum wage. And he started out by taking out the trash... vacuuming the carpets... mowing the lawn. He did a pretty good job at first. But then he started playing the 'expert' card, acting as if he were still being helpful, but influencing you little by little to move in his direction-- to take down some of those paintings you like so much and put up some of his favorite posters.

Over time, you ended up listening to his 'counsel' more and more. Soon he had you repainting the walls to his liking, while he sipped on a piña colada in your favorite armchair. At every turn he alternated between congratulating you for your

wisdom, your hipness, and your cleverness, and berating you for being such a clumsy asshole. He laughed at you when you talked about bringing out those brushes and canvases again, reminding you that there was no WAY you were quite good enough yet to do anything like that. "Maybe wait just a little bit longer, then you'll be ready," he said with a confident smile on his lips.

And you believed him. You had a choice about it the whole time, from the very start, all those years ago, and you've been choosing to believe him, day in and day out. Eventually he climbed out of your favorite armchair and actually up onto your back, "just for a quick little piggyback ride," he whispered. And you agreed. "Sure, come on up... it'll be fine," you told yourself. And he did.

Soon you were hobbling around the living room with this ogre on your back, pointing and shouting directions so loudly into your ear that you started to believe that his voice was your own voice. That his thoughts, ideas, and intentions were your own. That his malice was yours; that his layers of protective defense mechanisms were yours... that his selfish need for more love, more sex, more everything was your own. You took it all in stride. And you paid the consequences.

You forgot that the heaviness you felt every day, every night, every waking moment was this smelly, unbathed jerk riding around on your back. You told yourself (or was it him?) that you simply had to be strong, carry on... that it would all get better soon. And so, at his slightest suggestion, you threw open the windows and invited the clamor of the world into

your living room. You ran outside and grabbed the lawn furniture from the patio and threw them through your beautiful plate glass windows. You gathered trash from the gutter and then scattered it around your kitchen. You invited rats and leeches and wild monkeys into your home, and when they threw feces at you, you told yourself that it was all just part of life.

You taped up black trash bags over the windows to block out all the light, and then you set fire to the curtains. The flames licked the ceiling, leaving charred black designs on the walls, ashes on the floor, and a stench in the air. You ate stale cigarettes for breakfast, and sobbed into your pillow at night about how unfair the world was. You poured gasoline on the lawn and set it on fire, then rode your bicycle through the inferno, weeping at the 'cruelty of the world'.

You smashed your favorite guitar against the windshield of your car, until strings broke and the headstock cracked and tuning machines were hanging off at strange angles. Then you turned on your tape recorder and sang out-of-tune songs about heartbreak and weariness. You pounded nails into your car's tires, then drove it around the block until hot black smoke poured from the wheels... You drove it up over the curb, through the front yard and crashed through the wall of your house and into the living room, smacking your head against the inside of your windshield, leaving a spider web crack in the glass and on your forehead.

You poured rat poison into the well of your home, then took a long, hot bath and cried because you felt so bad.

You wrapped your favorite baseball bat in rusty barbed wire and then chased the cat around the house. You made prank phone calls to your loved ones and cursed at them through the telephone, foaming at the mouth and throwing raisins at the tv set. You tied a blindfold around your head and then ran at the wall with a pair of scissors in your hand. You juggled open box cutters. You stuck pennies in the light socket. You soiled yourself and then rolled around on the floor, laughing like a crazed man.

All the while, he was riding on your back, whispering all of these ideas into your ear. "This is what will set you free," he promised with a smirk. You thought the smirk was your own--that somehow you were going to get ahead in life; that you would somehow get the best of this world. That the world, and everyone in it, would finally recognize your true genius and pay you what it owed you. And it owed you a lot.

For years this has gone on. Decades. And on a regular basis, you would throw your hands into the air, look up at the sky and cry, "Why me?! What did I ever do to deserve this?!"

But you missed something. In those moments of desperation, as you were crying your truth to the sky and the stars above, you didn't happen to notice that the creep riding on your back was mouthing those very words along with you. Even those very words were not your own; they were his. You got so used to hearing his voice in your ear that you took it on as your own. You forgot the sound of your own voice.

Somewhere along the way, you noticed something magical; something long-forgotten that tickled a special place in your heart's memory... just as the sun was about to set, or about to rise... just as storm clouds were about to roll in... just as you were about to brush your teeth, you recognized that something wonderful was just out of reach. Instead of the usual anger, sadness, fear, and despair at the awful state of things, this tiny, strangely familiar feeling of hopeful joy rose like a bubble from the bottom of the ocean and welled up in your heart. Your eyes opened wide, and you started in surprise at this feeling, which had a very different flavor than all the rest: it tasted like gratitude.

The guy on your back was quick to take the credit. "Oh, you felt that? Yeah, that was me. It's a good thing you've been listening to me... following my recommendations... otherwise you probably NEVER would have felt that. Want some more? Let's go raise some hell!"

And with that you would once again turn away from the silence that had brought the glimmer of peaceful, hopeful joy... your birthright. You went right back to the mayhem of the day. And the joy would dissipate back into feelings of despair. As hard as you tried to 'grab and hold on' to those special, magical feelings of belonging, of oneness with the world and everyone in it, they would only take the stage fleetingly, from behind the curtain, and would disappear just as quickly as they'd come.

One day you sat down, tired. Enough is enough, you thought. Something is not right. Something is not working.

This cannot be what life is truly about... running around like a chicken with its head cut off, searching and dissecting and collecting and disposing and running into walls, bruising body and heart all the time.

"What if I take a look in the mirror?" That was the thought you had, and when you did, the guy on your back was startled. And angered. If you were to do that, especially for very long, you might notice him hanging on your back. And then there would be trouble.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you," he said a little too quickly, trying to cover it up with an easy, dismissive laugh. "That's just a waste of time anyway... your time is worth more than that. Let's go blow some shit up instead."

But this time, something about looking in the mirror, as uncomfortable as it might be, really sounded intriguing. "It can't be any worse than what my life has been like already," you figure. And you walk into the bathroom. You take a quick peek in the mirror above the sink, where you brush your teeth every day. But until now, you've only stared vacantly into the mirror, not really expecting to see anything different than your own chin, your own stubble, and the foamy toothpaste you spit into the sink. This time there's no toothbrush. There's no auto-pilot. You're looking in the mirror to see if you can see anything different.

And you do.

You spot something peeking up from behind your left shoulder. What in the world...? A little tuft of hair poking up, and one eyebrow, trying to remain undetected. You turn around and try to look back over your own shoulder to see yourself better, but something is blocking the way. And an insistent voice is saying, with increasing intensity, "This is a big waste of time! C'mon, let's go DO something!"

But on this day, you hesitate. You head slowly but persistently toward the bedroom, with its full-length mirror. Even though you feel the need to pour some more gasoline in the front lawn and shoot flaming arrows into it, you pause for just a few more moments. You turn to one side.

And there, right before your eyes, is a 240 pound beast hanging on your back with its arms around your neck, just barely cutting off your airflow. You see it there, with your own eyes. And it keeps looking away, determined not to meet your gaze, for it knows precisely what will happen if it does. It is shouting something-- 'waste of time! waste of time!' and keeps trying to dodge and duck, working to spin you back around so you can't see it.

All of its wriggling around causes you to lose your balance, and you fall awkwardly to the floor, gasping for breath and hoping like hell you'll survive whatever this is that is happening. You wrangle with the beast, and it still has its arms around your throat. You manage to spin around under its weight so that you're facing the mirror from the other side, and you catch sight of it again, in all its twisted glory.

"I see you!" you shout. It looks up in terror. And in that moment, you lock eyes with it in the mirror. It starts to scream and grabs a beer bottle and slams it against the mirror, which shatters and collapses upon itself. But you've already seen. You reach back and grab hold of hairy flesh and wrench yourself around and up into a seated position.

Face to face, you peer directly into the eyes of your tormentor. The kidnapper who brainwashed you into believing that he was your savior. The abuser who lied about caring deeply for you. The monster who enslaved you. The beast that locked you in a cage.

And suddenly, you can breathe again like never before. You take the deepest breath you've taken in decades, and you see its eyes grow as wide as saucers. You begin to smile, and as it takes one last gasp and tries to unleash its final battle cry, it disintegrates before your very eyes. No blood. No vomit. No urine. No stench. It vanishes completely, leaving no trace... no evidence of ever having existed. Except for the broken mirror, the monkey feces all over the walls, the charred front yard, the jagged shards of glass and rusty barbed wire littering the living room floor.

He's not around to help you clean up. But he's also not around to wreak havoc anymore. So you begin the task at hand. Slowly, you move room to room, sweeping, vacuuming, mopping up the mess... repainting, replacing windows, tearing down the black plastic, pumping out the poison water and upgrading the well.

And you realize that he was your choice. All along. You made an agreement. You made sacrifices, and you also received some sort of payoff, some reward for your part in the deal. Maybe it was fame. Sex. Glamour. Money. Reputation.

Or maybe it was poverty. Hunger. Sadness. Victimhood status. With rewards like these, there would never be a need to chase your dreams and face your fears, right? You could defer the act of stepping more fully into your power as a leader, an artist, a hero, a poet, a parent, a friend, a lover... and as your fully-realized true self. Maybe even circumvent that discomfort forever. It seemed like a pretty good payoff at the time.

But now you see a deeper truth. Now you sit in the eye of the storm, resting calmly. When it's time to work, you work, but with peace in your heart. When it's time to relax, you relax with peace in your heart. As the wind blows the curtains, as the storm outside blows trash down the street, as the wails of the police sirens cry out in the night, as fear and panic and worry and uncertainty work each other over in the alley behind your house to the sound of chains, broken bottles, switchblades and gunfire, through all of it you sit quietly and watch.

The inner calm of your divine living room is a sanctuary for your heart.

Flying dream

I walked out into the sunshine. I found myself at the top of a huge, grassy hill; more of a mountain, actually. Covered in green... up high, in the clouds, almost. I walked over to the very ridge and looked down. Then, without a word, I leapt forward, diving off the edge. I spread my arms with a relaxed smile on my face and felt myself begin to soar. Back and forth, I circled high above, surveying the land.

There was no fear. Only pure joy and freedom. And I did it again and again and again.

This is how my dream went last night. Flying dreams. I know there must be some significance... Guidance, please?

Yes. Of course. You've slipped the bonds of ego. And you are flying, free of those restraints. Why is it so difficult for your intellect, your ego, to accept? Even just now, I saw you hesitate and pause, ready to go back and erase that first complete sentence. "How could I have possibly slipped the bonds of ego?" "Who am I to do anything so great?"

We remind you, this is great. And at the same time, it's kind of no big deal. You're simply returning to your natural state. That's all. No fanfare. No parades. But you do get to have the occasional flying dream. Ha ha ha.

Now you'll begin seeing through a different lens. You've already discovered people watching you, staring, and being impacted by something about your presence. No, it wasn't your clothing. It was something much deeper, and much more

apparent-- your presence is shining more brightly now. And as we've mentioned, many people don't know what to 'do' with that; they don't know how to make sense of it. That's okay. Just let them experience their path without worrying too much about them.

Now you will notice that being magnified. This means there may be people out there for whom you are an even better projection screen than before. They may project all over you and then react as if it WERE you, with a vengeance. You are now prepared for this. You have all the tools you need to deal calmly and compassionately with them. Others will find you irresistibly attractive, and want to talk to you and tell you their life story. And then you'll get those in between, who just watch out of the corner of their eye, trying to figure out what your angle is.

It's all okay. We remind you just to relax. "Rest in the eye of the storm," we say. Over and over again. This is the appropriate approach to take.

Also. You are discovering that time in solitude is a very important thing for you. You've written nearly 30 pages and 6 songs in just a couple of days, and you did that in the midst of turbulence-- adjusting to a new kind of freedom. We understand. Perfectly natural. It is at this time that you must acknowledge and accept this fact: you indeed do need time away from everyone and everything normal in your life, on a regular basis. This is not meant to punish anyone. Quite the contrary-- it's to allow gifts that we have imparted to rise to the surface and emanate forth.

The daily distractions inherent in 'normal' life at this point feel to you as if they are driving you mad. Until now, you've been judging yourself harshly for having such powerful emotional responses. But now that you've had only a few days away, you see that big things are happening. In the span of some 72 hours, you've made what feels to you like tremendous headway. And to top it all off, you had a flying dream, a signal of confirmation that you're on an appropriate path, moving in an appropriate direction, right? Yes. We acknowledge you. We see you. And yes, you're definitely moving in the 'right' direction for what you say you want in life-- to be an instrument of light, love, wisdom, compassion, healing, peace, strength, and grace.

This is actually everyone's natural state. You'll see it come to the surface as others interact with you. Now, more than ever, your responsibility includes suspending judgment of others. Knowing what you know now, how could it be any other way? Now you see, with a bird's eye view, how things are connected-- how others are living and dying and suffering and struggling and wrestling with the ego, their only source of terror. They look through the ego's lenses, not realizing they are seeing an altered state of reality. And even when they do begin to realize, they don't know how to remove the glasses from their faces.

It's all part of the natural unfolding of things, so don't get too wound up about it. It has been unfolding this way for a long time on your plane of existence, where time seems linear to you. This is the natural order of things. And where you are is perfect for this moment, this eternal moment. You did not

come here to follow, dear one. Remember that. Keep plugging away. Keep exploring. Keep asking questions. Keep wondering and looking. Keep loving. And remember, most definitely remember to suspend judgment of YOURSELF first and foremost. While the ego, once again, would have you believe this to be acting selfishly and to be avoided, at this point you understand that suspending judgment of yourself leads to suspending judgment of all situations and all people and all existence. Where judgment has been withheld, there is room for lots of glorious gratitude to flow in and surround everything, soaking it all up in love.

Create space. You remember that, right? It's been in your mind for a long time, right? Creating space in traffic... in the grocery store... at work... in your daily life... Yes. Right on target. Love is space. Creating space is a way of creating room for love to unfold and envelop everything in sight. These will look to others like miracles you are performing. They are. But you will not be 'performing' anything... you will simply be creating space in order to allow love to fill the room. To fill hearts. To fill lives.

Including your own, dear one. Including your own.

Forgiveness. Yes, you thought you were through typing, didn't you? Not so fast, dear one. We know you're hungry and ready to eat breakfast, but one more important word before you pause.

Forgiveness. That word carries such transformative power that its importance simply cannot be overstated or

exaggerated. You already know intellectually and rationally that forgiving all others sets you free in the end, releases YOU from the bonds of attachment (desire/fear; attraction/repulsion), creating space and allowing you room to breathe. Room to love both yourself and others.

Now is the time to know this with your heart and to begin carrying out the practices of forgiveness at once. This is an urgent matter. You've been carrying around these chains for too long, dear one. And guess what? This is no longer about freeing yourself. "It doesn't matter so much if I don't get free of these chains... I don't matter that much anyway... I'm not rich or important. I'm not famous. It doesn't make any difference how my life unfolds." Sound familiar, dear one? We say there is plenty on the line. Yes, you always have choice about this.

But as you know, great gifts and talents come with great responsibility. And now that you are unlocking new treasure chests of insight and awareness, it's time for you to adjust (once again) to a new identity. Yes. That's right. Identity. That's been on your mind a lot lately, hasn't it? No accidents, dear one. You planned this out brilliantly, although your ego would have you believe otherwise. Yes. Identity shifting once again, and transforming into an even more authentic, more genuine 'you', even as you let go of old ideas and concepts of what you have believed 'you' to be. Let them go. They are like a used up coat, or an old pair of worn out boots. It's perfectly okay to release them into the atmosphere, sending them on their way with love and gratitude for the service they have provided. They were appropriate for a time. Now they are no longer appropriate.

So now what new aspects of your identity ARE appropriate? We remind you to focus on a few key things-- 1) looking the ego in the eyes / saying, "you're not driving the bus anymore-- I am"; 2) forgiveness of yourself first and others second; 3) the confirmation and acknowledgment inherent in the gift of the flying dream.

Keep these three things close at hand and close at heart, dear one. And your journey will continue to unfold perfectly, as it always has. In fact, there's no other way for it to unfold. For everything you see and hear, and everything you do not, is all inside The Divine's teacup. There is no other.

The genesis of a lie

Quiet. The quiet landscape of the desert at night, full moon rising overhead. Rest there. In that silence is knowing, wisdom, joy, acceptance of all as it unfolds. So many masks to see... so many apparent realities. Just remember the movie projector... everything you see is the light dancing across the blank screen. There's no way to 'beat the system' by engaging it here-- the only way to true freedom is to recognize the motion for what it is; light dancing.

The fun part is when you can enter the dance of light, knowing full well that it is nothing more than that, and enjoy that dance. Here you will find the man who smiles throughout the day, embracing fully everything that unfolds and appears before him, no matter how startling it may seem to the intellect, which would quite prefer that life follow his ordained schedule, doing so with crisp, 90 degree hospital folds to the

sheets when making life's bed. That's how he rolls. He's a walking, talking measuring tape. And that's fine. We all need one. But not to run our lives.

What is happiness? Fulfilling your life's mission-- your purpose.

Listen, can you hear him now? Critiquing as your hands fly across the keyboard? "Oh, that's boring! That's no good. That sucks!" Yes, even as you write about these things-- especially as you do so, he is at it, waiting for you to stop watching what he is doing so he can sneak up and try to put his hands over your eyes... start whispering again to distract you from your heart song. The funniest part is that all it takes to remain in an appropriate constellation is to look straight at him and smile. "I see you. I hear you." And he shrinks back into the corners.

All those years ago, I had a feeling that I could succeed in the world, if only they understood me. I was not necessarily an expert at anything, but I could communicate and guide and coach, because I was able to see some sort of bigger picture. And I was so confused-- in order to teach whatever, it appeared I had to master the content. I understood the important connection, but felt like a teacher with no content. I knew that was also no good, if I wanted to get by in this world.

Today, here you are, exactly there, doing precisely that. And it turns out that the 'content' you teach is that of connection; connection to resources, connection to other people, and connection to self. No maps. No curriculum. No book. Simply your own self. "Look here... this is how you

could be in the world. This is possible. This exists. This is a 'thing'. Would you like a taste of this love, this delicious rose water? There is plenty for everyone. It springs from a deep well, hidden before your eyes in your heart. Look deeply, listen deeply, and drink deeply from that well within you. It is the one that will nourish you and guide you along your path."

There is no possible way to fall off of your path-- it is all your path. And don't worry about sadness... experiencing sadness is part of the play. Sadness, anger, joy, fear, confusion... these are all stones along the path. They are not meant to be picked up and placed into your backpack-- they get heavy very quickly! No, they are only there to be acknowledged and appreciated for their unique beauty, then left where you found them as you continue on. To become a rock collector is to dedicate much precious time and energy to carrying around heavy rocks on your back. Shy away from the role of 'collector', and instead embrace the lightness of traveling in freedom. Everything you need is right here in the room. This is true.

The common habit among people on the planet is to unwittingly send outward what is within. Then to 'see' it in those around you, you either run toward it or recoil. These are all a matter of mistaken perception. Simply by pausing and turning inward, as you've been counseled many times before, will you find everything you could ever hope to seek, and even better. Even more. Even more magical and fulfilling. For the hungers that you seek to feed among the flashing lights and loud noises of your experience are but ghosts of the cravings for love. And within your very being lies the deepest, most

abundant well ever... far beyond what your intellect could imagine.

Gold? Bank accounts? Guitars? Houses? Imagine the most elaborate, satisfying, magical thing you could want, sitting right before you. The most magnificent castle... the most up-to-date recording studio. Anything at all. No sensual pleasure is off limits. In fact, the more enticing and satisfying your intellect believes it to be, the better.

Because no matter what it is, it will seem as useless pocket lint in your palm on a windy day when compared to the well of the heart that lies within you. Drop your bucket down, and let it fill. Then drink deeply. Leap over the wall and let yourself fall head over heels... go for a swim. Dive deeply, as deeply as you can, and swim down, into the heart's core... deeper than you've ever dared before. And notice how easy it is to breathe here, leagues beneath the surface of the heart's ocean. There is no time, space, or suffering here. This is where all answers lie. This is where wisdom grows and love swims effortlessly, manifesting endlessly in pure delight at its own existence reflected all around it.

Should you find yourself on the ocean floor, take your shovel off your back and dig even deeper still, tunneling down into the center of your own heart. Mine that heart with all of your might... never fear going just a little deeper. For the rubies and magical gifts you find there will fill your pockets quickly, and you'll find that the only way to keep going will be to cast off your gifts, offering them to everyone around you. They will think you are crazy-- 'He's a fool! How could he give all of his

love and passion away to others? Doesn't he realize that if he keeps giving love away freely, he's going to run out soon and be left in the desert? Stalled on the side of the road? Living in a van down by the river?' This is because they see themselves precisely there-- in the middle of a hot desert on the side of the road, car jacked up and flat tire lying nearby, shredded... Sitting there in fear, waiting for help to come, imagining that they are powerless and desperate for love from any kind passerby.

When the truth, as you know, is that your pockets fill up quickly. The faster you release the false ideas of reality and remember your role as part of the 'flow' of abundance in the universe, the easier it is to get back to the Heart's business of emptying those pockets so there's room for more gold to appear. This process of remembering your role appears to the ego to be in direct conflict with its desire to be seen as unique, special, or otherwise exempt from becoming 'just another cog in the wheel'. It folds its arms and refuses to do such a 'menial' job as simply emptying its own pockets and giving away jewels to others. "Besides, I will starve! And so will YOU!" it demands.

This is the genesis of the lie.

You are always and forever free of the lie; you do not live in the lie. However, you are always free to choose to listen and believe the lie, if you like. And it will always bring heartbreak, no matter how you unfold it. The only starvation that only happens is that of sitting here at the Banquet, delicacies piled high on the silver platter before you, wine goblet filled to the

rim, resting easily within arm's reach... And there you sit, with your hands covering your face, refusing to acknowledge the feast you could partake in at any moment. You smell the delicious fragrance. You hear the other guests at the Banquet, laughing and sharing jokes, smiling and offering love and acceptance. Eating freely. No one goes hungry here at the Banquet. And all are already seated.

I raise my cup to you. Will you join me in a toast to the Beloved?

Eyeball

Can you shrink yourself?

Can you begin to shed the ego's preferences, one by one? Can you cut off first a fingernail? Then maybe a toenail? Then a thumb? Your ego will begin to squirm. But can you persist in the face of his cries of anguish?

Can you cut off a foot? A leg? A thigh? Can you continue discarding little pieces of him, one after another, until there is nothing left but an eyeball, hanging in the air?

And then, can you discard even those filters, so that there is nothing left of him but a tiny, shrunken point in space, observing?

And as a final act of mutiny against the pirate who commandeered your ship so long ago, can you draw your sword and cut away even that point of observation,

obliterating "yourself" completely and becoming one with everything you already were, have been, are, and will be?

The wind will grow still. The tempest in your head will be revealed as the simple wind in your sails. And you will remember the truth of who you always weren't.

Your work

You see it now. Right in front of your eyes. Your work is to show up in the world as genuinely and authentically as you possibly can. This is the work that will ripple out forever, teaching others to get back in touch with their own hearts and own truth, that they may carry that torch into the darkness that they perceive.

What a wonderful day it is! You are on your path, as you have always been. And through music and in your daily life, you are showing the world what love can look like. You are serving as an example. So continue doing precisely what you are doing-- give. And listen. And follow. Continue doing what feels right through the lens of your heart. And continue doing that work, again and again. And do not fear the need to ebb and flow with the tides of the energies within your physical body. This is right and correct and natural. This is to be honored. Allow yourself the space to do this, for space is love. By taking the time and space you need to recharge, you are creating a conduit for more love to flow into the world through your own being.

Remember also that the love flows from all directions to the Axis Mundi-- to your heart of gold. This is always flowing toward you. You need only to remember with your intellect--do whatever it takes to continue remembering, to keep the Truth at the forefront of your mind. As you do this, you will notice that your thoughts actually do create your reality. There is only a perceived gap between the two. In all actuality, the vision board technique does, in fact, create and shape the reality you experience.

Give generously. Love generously. These are your two tenets. And remember as well: joy and tranquility are to be your buzzwords these days. Let them be the yardstick by which you measure your days, your hours, your minutes, your life. For it is in those moments of joy and tranquility when love surges through you the most powerfully... and feels most effortless. This is correct. When your dams and blockades are lowered, the river of love flows freely through you, outward and inward. It is only when your ego is dancing for control that you experience what feels like resistance; resistance to the ever-flowing change of the universe and resistance to allowing the heart to flow with love in all directions. For when this love is flowing and you are sitting squarely in gratitude with all defenses down, it becomes quite obvious that the ego is not in charge. Is not driving the bus. Is not necessary as a leader.

This creates friction for the ego, which would have you believe that you will die, perish, suffer, and disappear without it. And you already know that the ego is the one that will die, perish, feel as though it is suffering, and disappear when you

turn your attention away from its demands and back toward the heart.

The ego is highly invested in keeping you confused. Stumbling around in the darkness, chaos in your ears and mind. That is how it keeps you distracted. When you focus with one-pointed attention on the heart and only the heart, you will find yourself back at home, in the eye of the storm, where joy, tranquility, and gratitude rain down upon you eternally.

Tonight when you play kirtan, allow yourself to relax completely into the experience. Allow yourself to let go of all technical details and simply rest in the flow of the music. Allow yourself to fully engage with the flow of energy in the room-- do not hide from those eyes, ears, and hearts who look to you for solace. They are all there for a reason, even when only one person shows up. They are all there to dance in love and light with you. You are creating a time/space where, for just a little while, the outside world is allowed to drop away and the magic music of the soul swirls around in the room. This is the moment when you reach deep within to touch the eternal energies that lie within all of us. This is the time when you call forth the love and magic inherent in your own soul in order that they may cause the hearts of all in the room to resonate sympathetically... to awaken to the call of love that every heart responds to.

It is the ego that would have you focus on outcomes. The intellect that is busy judging and labeling the experience, rating it on a scale of 1 to 10, as if kirtan were a commodity to

be bought, sold, traded on the foreign exchange market. Indexed and marketed, like frozen orange juice concentrate, or pork bellies.

You did not come here to be a stock market analyst. The intellect is a wonderful servant, and an awful leader. You did not come here to succumb to the demands of the ego, with all its empty promises. You did not come here to sit quietly and watch as a world that makes no sense drives itself into the ground, causing sadness and fear to touch the hearts of your brothers and sisters.

You came here to remind your brothers and sisters of the brilliance that already resides within them. You came here as a messenger, a teacher, a guide, a cheerleader, a trusted brother on the path. You came here to remind those around you that fear is unnecessary. That love is their natural state. That the flow of electrons endlessly in all directions reflects the genius of the universe in all Her wisdom. You came here to sound the call of the heart, to awaken others from their sleep. To show them what they already know but may not remember: that the chaos of the world is not who they are. To remind them of their True Identity as the heart.

You came here to demonstrate that looking outward is not the key to happiness; and that striving and reaching and grasping at the empty straws of the physical existence lead nowhere but frustration, fear, and sadness. Only by relinquishing the ego's demands for security can the heart's song be heard. And only when the song of the heart is allowed to freely resonate do we remember that security is meaningless

in a world where there is nothing but endless life, joy, peace, serenity, and love.

This is the true state of Reality, where your heart lives. Every day your heart awakens in pure bliss. Every morning your heart dances and sings and celebrates your existence. It is only the ego that seems to close the blinds and shutters, filling the air with zeros and endless chatter to keep you from throwing open the windows and dancing in the sunshine of the heart. It is only the ego that would have you believe you are locked in the cellar, surrounded only by cold stone walls, endless worldly demands and suffering.

Simultaneously the ego is making the very demands you perceive and pointing at them as if they were being imposed upon you by some external source. This is the brilliant flexibility and underhanded skill of the ego. This is how it gets you to do its bidding... Throwing eggs at your coat when you are not looking, and then pointing outward and saying, 'over there... someone has thrown eggs at you... time to get even!' When you begin to go into silent observation, when you begin to examine the actions of the ego carefully, you unravel the web of lies it has been weaving. You throw open the doors and windows and shine light on what is truly going on. When you turn and look directly into the face of the ego, you see that it shows you your own face, which turns out to be only a mask designed for manipulating you.

Be manipulated no longer. Let the small, petty demands of the ego drive your bus no more. Let your attention and energy no longer be directed by the dictates of an empty shell, a straw

man, a phantom that has no existence, so substance, and no true meaning. The ego is empty, having a beginning, middle, and an ending, as does everything attached to the physical world.

Only that which is imperceptible through the physical senses has any substance, value, or brilliance. All things that truly shine in the world are those which serve as conduits for the unspeakable, the unthinkable, the unknowable. That which the instruments of the intellect cannot reach-- these are the only things worth reaching for.

Reach for them. Strive. With all your heart. Releasing attachment to outcome at every moment. This is the guaranteed path to success. By the way: all paths lead to the heart. It is impossible to fail in Reality. You are already home.

CHAPTER THREE

You are officially certified

The creative spark is welling up more powerfully within you. You remember those days not so long ago, when you were in grade school, when at the same time it felt that your tender little heart was being pulled in 1,000 directions, you were simultaneously discovering a magical world of creativity and freedom through writing. We remember seeing you in reading class, with your third grade teacher, where you could have gone on for days writing and inventing and creating magical worlds to explore... in those days, you'll recall, the stories and ideas came effortlessly, surrounding you and climbing onto your shoulders like so many dearly beloved pets, all eager to play and share love with you.

You danced in fields of your own making; flew through skies of your own design. Which, of course were of My design, as always. For you are of My design. So it's funny that you would bend yourself into various shapes, like a pretzel, in order to avoid feeling like you are inherently bad, evil, broken, or defective. It is simply your attention, focus, and perseveration on ideas of not-enough-ness that cause your feelings of sadness, despair, and disconnection from the heart source.

Those days are finished for you. Forever. Now you are entering the season of creative genius and expression... where you set aside any doubts about ability, self-worth, and success, and move forward into the act of creating and actively sharing

your genius and brilliance with the world, helping others to see their own genius and brilliance as you spiral upwards in joy and creativity.

A hint: the more you release and let go of, in the mental, emotional, and physical realms, the higher you will spiral upwards, and the stronger your sense of joy and feelings of lightness and playfulness. Even in the most seemingly grave of circumstances, you will stand in a deep sense of calm joy, which will bubble forth and serve to comfort those around you. Effortlessly. Always effortlessly. And when we use that word, we do not suggest that you will do so much 'work' that it will **seem** effortless. No-- rather, quite the opposite: By dropping any ideas of inadequacy, lack, or not-enough-ness, you will spontaneously step into awareness of the ongoing fact that you have always been enough-- you have always had exactly what you have needed to inspire and comfort others and to lead them on the path of growth by your example. You have always needed nothing more than this: nothing.

And today, as you carry your satchel full of gifts, insights, talents, and willingness to step more fully into your power, embodying a beautiful balance of masculine and feminine energies, you enter a new phase of your life as teacher and guide. The time is now. Your time is now. Lest your ego still demand external validation (which, of course, it will always do for as long as you choose to give it the power to do so), we say you are officially certified to go into the world and share your gold. You are officially graduated into the ranks of spiritual leaders fit to demonstrate to the world what you know through silent, loving action. You are hereby awarded

the Golden Globe of Supreme Confidence / Supreme Humility. Here is the fan club t-shirt signifying your membership in an exclusive, elite club of which all of humanity belongs.

You are hereby elected President of the Heart Committee. Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Playful, Passionate Artist-Lover-Composer-Teacher. King of Heart Hill. We give you our full approval and certification-- there are no more online courses to take or books to study. There are no more gurus to seek out or special incantations to recite. There are no more secret passwords to remember or sacred objects to shop for on ebay. No more commemorative paperweights or golden letter openers to collect. No more autographs to request. No more complaints to file. No more stripes to earn. No more nods of approval to hope for, nor pats on the back to want.

All obstacles in your perception have been in perception only, never in Reality. And as we wave our magic wand over you, in this very moment, all obstacles in your perception are now removed. You are FREE! Go forth starting right NOW and live joyfully!

Playing small

Pay close attention. Who is the one that causes you to self-deprecate in creative situations? Who or what is it that would have you believe that any creation you bring into the world would be worthy of scorn, teasing, or mockery? What is it within you that would allow you to share your gold and brilliance while simultaneously making fun of it yourself?

Only the ego would have you believe that anything sourced from the Divine would be worthy of scorn or mockery.

There is no time or space for such nonsense. Open your heart. Open your mind. And open your mouth and sing. Let your inner music out fully; let it shine through however it may. Know that whatever facial expressions accompany it, and however others may respond to the sounds and sights that they perceive accompanying it, know with all your heart that it is only their fear in the face of your courage to express that limits them. And their fear stems only from ego. Only the ego would have them believe that any and all free expression must somehow first pass through some metric; must first receive approval before being ready to be revealed to the world.

This is, once again, the ego's way of maintaining control by distracting through fear. When you open your heart, your mind, and your mouth and allow free expression of the Divine to pass through you, there is nothing but the Divine to perceive. And this scares the living shit out of the ego, which would have you believe that it is the boss, the gatekeeper, the judge of what is worthy to be presented to the world.

Any individual who would dare cast aspersions upon the expression through you of the Divine is simply allowing ego to drive their bus. Look upon them with compassion, for who among us has not experienced this form of suffering? Look upon yourself with compassion, and allow the Divine to ravage the world with its grace through you, an instrument of light, love, and limitless healing and compassion. This is your birthright.

The journey is the purpose of the journey

The purest activity is one in which all attachment to outcome is surrendered; you simply engage in it because it is who you are in the moment. That is reason enough.

It is the ego that would have you believe you need a 'good enough' reason to follow any path dictated by your heart. 'Good enough' being measured by standards created by the ego... standards that are as solid and steadfast as morning fog. Ever changing, like the winds, these so-called standards of quality can and do change at a moment's notice, depending upon the manipulative tactic the ego sees as helpful in making the ego appear three dimensional, real, and alive.

The path of the heart can be recognized by the joyful emotions it evokes. When you follow your heart, you know it because your heart sings. "Do what makes your heart sing." That is good guidance to follow.

What if you do not yet know what makes your heart sing? Then you know you've been allowing yourself and your life to be guided by the intellect, ego, or small mind. You've likely been searching for some semblance of security, in whatever form your ego has persuaded you will guarantee your safety... will guarantee your survival... often with the promise of infinite survival. Yet you know, deep inside, that infinite survival of the physical body is not possible. The physical body was never meant to embody spirit infinitely.

Yet this is precisely what the ego promises, as long as you jump through the next set of hoops set up by the ego. Bow to

the commands of the ego and you will know freedom, power, and glory... these are the ego's empty promises. And they are all bound to fail, without question, for all of the guarantees and promises extended by the ego are those that deal with the world of the finite; the world of time-bound articles. The ego cannot escape this, for the ego is created from this.

Your true identity, the Divine, is beyond the time-bound perceived experience of life. This is what is meant by "you are in this world, but not OF this world." The You that is actually You is not the You that you believe You to be. For the real You that You are is beyond the grasp of the intellect, and therefore beyond belief. Beyond all conceptual constructs is where You live, endlessly and beginninglessly.

This is the reason you can drop all anger, all grudges, all sadness, and all story. Right now. In this very moment, as you are reading these words. You can surrender all of it, dropping it, letting it all fall away. For it is all based on memory, perception, thought... simply materials of the conceptual world. The conceptual world is simply temporary. And limiting.

The story you tell yourself about your identity is not your identity. The grudges you hold, the fears you grasp onto, and the pride you take in your personality or your abilities are simply various aspects of the conceptual. They are the web spun by the ego in order to create the ego itself. Do you see the circular logic here? This is an indication of the false and empty nature of the ego, of your story, and of the identity that you perceive yourself to 'have'.

How can you 'have' an identity? By definition, identity is what you ARE. To 'have' anything suggests that there is an owner (subject) and a separate identity (object), of which the subject claims ownership. The misperception is that the object (physical body) is the subject itself. And yet the very act of claiming ownership ('my body') clearly negates the possibility that the physical body is the identity itself. It is no more your true identity than your favorite shirt is.

The story you tell about yourself and your life is precisely the same. It is like a shirt you can put on, take off, and dispose of at any given moment. All of the victimization to claim to have suffered... all of the anger and rage and sadness and fear that you embrace and endlessly protect through so-called 'rational thinking'... All of your desire to control your life and the image you project to others... all of it is temporary and empty.

True freedom comes from dropping the story. Right now. All of it. True freedom comes from simply stepping fully into the present moment as it unfolds. The ego asks, "Why are we doing this? Especially when such effort is involved?" The Heart affirms, "This is what brings joy. This is one way I can be of service. This is what is appropriate in this moment. That is reason enough to undergo the perceived hardships of service."

When dropping one story, it is often tempting to embrace another story to replace the old one. "I'm dropping my story! I'm the guy who has just dropped his story. I must be amazing! I must be spiritually advanced!" The ego has just sabotaged you and short-circuited your release of the story.

Keep in mind that this process may take some time, because it is so incredibly simple. The ego would have you believe that dropping your story and sinking into your true nature requires years of suffering, in order to somehow 'earn' the right to acknowledge your own true nature. This is a lie. And yet, being so tricky, the ego would also have you believe that you are a failure for not simply dropping your story immediately. Notice how 'stick' and 'carrot' are offered to you in ways that create conflicts of interest. That's because the one true interest, the only one that you can count on from the ego, is the desire to keep you distracted. To keep you preoccupied and too busy to remember to turn inward to your heart. For the moment that you drop your story, you drop your forgetfulness of your true nature. And the moment you do that, you drop your need to cling to the ego's advice.

Silly

Fear. Fear of failure. Fear of success. Fear of looking silly.

What is so wrong with looking silly? Do not make the mistake of thinking that 'wisdom' is restricted to 'serious'. Keep in mind always that wisdom arises from love. And love is joyful. There is deep wisdom in playfulness, and there is joy in the acknowledgment of connection. Being gentle and easy, approaching life with a light touch, can go a long way toward staying in a place of gratitude and viewing the world through the lens of the heart.

Some symptoms of embracing Reality: a smile on the lips. Laughter. Lightheartedness. Playfulness. A willingness to look

silly. Eagerness to try new things. A commitment to flexibility. Embracing change. Honoring and blessing those who struggle with embracing change. Encouragement and support of yourself and all those around you, especially those who help you access those places in your life where ego tries to lead the way.

Forgiveness. Curiosity. Serenity. Silence. Song. Acceptance.

How much of this do you experience in your daily life? How much encouragement and support do you share with others, on a daily basis? And how deeply can you accept the life you perceive, precisely as it appears to you in this moment? How much of your true self do you share with the world? How much of your inner gold and brilliance do you bring out to share with others every day? How much of your wisdom do you generously give away, regardless of whether others will appreciate it or not?

With a light touch

As you learn the power of your words, you will begin to understand more clearly the importance of compassion.

Those around you whom you perceive to be trying to change you or control you or steer your beliefs or actions, those people are themselves on their own journey. There is never a need to be unkind as you set and maintain healthy boundaries. There is no need to surrender your own heart's truth in order to please any other person; simultaneously, there are generous and gracious ways of going about it. Light-

hearted, joyful laughter and a kind smile are always welcome approaches to anything. Where you can share your truth while maintaining a light touch, you will point the way back to Love.

The beautiful young woman and her mother, who come to your door carrying a bible in their hands, they are on their journey. You open the door. You offer a kind smile and explain that you are happy upon your path. And you add, quite frankly and with a smile, that you are listening to a Black Sabbath record, which is clearly heard in the background.

Your light touch brings laughter from them, and allows them to see you for who you really are, and to be seen for who they really are. You are connected through the heart by joy. And when you thank them, when you say with all genuine honesty, "I honor and bless you on your path," they know that you mean it. For blessings are powerful and sacred. And when given with true love, the effects are powerful, regardless of whether you are privileged enough to witness their impacts.

This is the key to serving as an Instrument of Peace. It does not mean avoiding conflict and taking on the role of 'doormat' for others to walk all over. It does not mean pushing the ego's conceptions of 'peace' onto others and ignoring or belittling their belief systems, either. It does mean genuinely honoring and blessing every living being as they journey on their path. Including yourself as you journey on your own path.

A light touch. It is the key to moving mountains. Pursue everything with a light touch. Strive as hard as you can to fulfill your heart's desires, releasing all attachment to outcome.

For outcome is guaranteed to be favorable, no matter how it appears through the limiting filters of human sensory perception.

The key to ending a 100-year feud is not necessarily to go banging down the other person's door in an earnest attempt to get the other party to 'see reason'. Sometimes, the most loving thing you can do is simply to create as much loving space as you can for others while they walk their journey. When the day comes that you meet face to face, the light touch of generous grace, flowing unhindered from the heart, will always point the way toward Reality.

And when faced with the seemingly most difficult situations of all, involving those loved ones who are nearest you, whom you claim as your kindred spirits, a light touch is paramount. As you witness your beloved walking his or her path, keep in mind that you cannot walk that path for them. True compassion involves creating space so that they may come into contact with Reality in their own time, on their own journey, regardless of any judgments you may have about their performance, success, or strategies upon the path. It is the ego that would have you try to direct and control the path of any other, in order to avoid experiencing its own pain of loss and suffering. Only the ego's certainty that any other person can be 'owned' or 'kept' or 'controlled', as an outside 'other' allows you to act in ways that do not point toward Truth.

Keep at the forefront of your mind always the importance of forgiveness, especially forgiveness toward yourself. When you perceive that you have acted out of the ego's demands,

honor and bless yourself for your human experience. Surrender any feelings of shame or guilt to the Divine, who accepts and embraces all. Know in your heart that you are the Divine, and know that every time you stumble upon your path, you are receiving evidence that you are indeed upon your path. You are living your journey. There is no way around it. There is no way to fail. There is no way to avoid it, for you have no control over it. You are upon your spiritual journey, like it or not. And we say 'like it or not' with tongue planted firmly in cheek, for it is only the ego that would set forth judgments upon the quality or efficiency or validity of your spiritual path. Only the ego would set timelines upon your path and expect Reality to heed its bidding.

As you sit and consider 'the best way' or 'the right way' to serve as an Instrument of Peace, remember that you are surrounded by opportunities for just that at every moment. All you have to do is walk out your front door and you will most definitely be met by opportunities to extend your Heart energy outward in all directions. Where you find conflict and annoyance, there is the opportunity. Where you find sadness or apathy, there is your opportunity. Where you find hostility and impatience, there is your opportunity. Where you find fear and a lack of ability for another to apologize for what you judge to be their own shortcoming, there is your opportunity. It is the ego that would have you believe that reflecting anything other than love and compassion back toward someone in pain will help the situation.

The ego struggles desperately with 'correct' and 'appropriate' responses to stimuli in the human experience.

Dropping back down into the Heart will always serve as your true and trusted compass.

Forgiveness

On your path, loved ones from the past, present, and future will find their way to you. This is because they are standing with you always, in the timeless field of the heart. In those seemingly dark moments when you feel lost or alone, know that all you need to do is return your attention to the Heart and you will be in touch with all of them, instantly and effortlessly. Only the ego would have you believe it is possible for anyone you love to be 'dead and gone.'

All loved ones you remember and countless whom you do not rest at ease through what can only be described through human language as 'multiple dimensions'. While the ego would have you believe this is only a concept suited for science fiction movies, in Reality it is not unusual or surprising. It is simply your limited perception via the human experience that makes such concepts seem otherworldly.

Do not worry too much about making sense of this rationally. Listen to your heart: if your heart sings as you read this, if some piece of this resonates for you, then simply acknowledge and move forward. The ego is the one that would have you engage in endless discussions about the feasibility of infinite, timeless love, while the Heart simply smiles.

Countless energies await your invitation, ready to serve your highest good... standing by for your beckoning call. These are the energies of the 10,000 directions, which live inside you at all times. You may think of them in terms of the Jungian archetypes-- The Lover, The Warrior, The Magician, and The Sovereign. While there exist countless energies of guidance and service, which are all aspects of your own true identity, these four main directions and associated energies are a fine place to begin learning how to access your inner brilliance.

Of importance here is to remember that these energies are not outside you; they are not summoned from some location far away, waiting for your cries for mercy and pleas for forgiveness before swooping down to do with you as they please. Only the ego would have you believe that IT is sovereign; that you somehow have cause to fear the wrath of some external power that is just itching for an excuse to strike you down. Only the ego would set up this apparent conflict between you and some 'other' outer power; some external source of love, designating itself as mediator.

No. Your true power lies within your own heart. And what you call 'salvation' is nothing more than freedom from the tyrannical ego, which would keep you preoccupied to the end of the physical body's days.

In order to tap into the infinite array of energies lying dormant within your heart, you need do nothing more than simply set the intention and then trust with all your loving power that they are unleashed, in service of the higher good of all involved. Know with all certainty that the energies you call

forth are awakened instantly. Then act with supreme confidence and supreme humility in the knowledge that your Heart guides you true.

When in doubt, invoke the energy of forgiveness, for there is never a shortage of need for forgiveness in the world. Forgiveness and gratitude are the life-giving lubricants that help ease the gears and inner workings of the Heart into action. In all actuality, they remove the blindfold of the ego, allowing your vision to take on its rightful power to see more deeply into all situations; to discern between truth and fantasy.

When in doubt, practice this invocation:

"I forgive myself for holding on to limiting ideas about the true identity of myself and others. I forgive all others who have hurt me in the past, and I forgive myself for holding on to such misperception for so long.

"I forgive myself for any and all unkindness, lack of empathy and compassion, and short-sightedness I have shown myself and others. I forgive myself for assuming that the physical body is my actual identity, and for treating myself and others as if this were true.

"I forgive myself for doubting my own inner wisdom and for any and all times when I have chosen, consciously or unconsciously, to ignore the inner call of my Heart in favor of grasping at the empty promises of the ego.

"I forgive myself for handing my power and brilliance over to the ego, and for taking on the needs and demands of the ego as my own.

"I offer my complete forgiveness, love, acceptance and support to all of those aspects of myself still holding on to judgment and fear. I call upon the inner wisdom of my own Heart to guide me, and I call upon the brilliance of my intellect/small mind/ego to its rightful place in service to my Heart.

"I recognize and acknowledge every other living creature as a mirror of myself, and I bless and honor them all as The Infinite Divine, which is none other than myself. For there is no 'other'. There is only Love. And I am That."

Instrument of peace

Accepting the mantle of Instrument of Peace gives you a whole new reason to care for your physical body, as well. Here it becomes important to maintain the physical body as a means of service to the One, while simultaneously keeping in mind that the body is not Life itself. The balance between total regard and total disregard for the human physical body is incredibly important to establish and maintain. And yet, as always, this too should be approached with a light touch. There is no need to try to become a world champion athlete if you are not already one. Conversely, there is also no need to abandon a healthy lifestyle, or to resist adopting some of the practices of a healthy lifestyle.

Stepping more fully into a life of service to the One is truly service to your own best interests, for you are the Divine. Letting go of those pursuits that only serve the ego means embracing those pursuits that serve the inner wisdom of your Heart. Again, this is not a call for you to send your money to some preacher on the television. It is not a demand that you live in abject poverty in order to receive some special blessing. These are all the ploys of the ego.

Rather, this is a call for you to turn inward, to the inner wisdom and guidance of your own Heart, which is the Heart of the universe itself. Where your Heart guides you, there is benefit for all. It matters not where you live, what you do for work, what kind of dwelling you sleep in at night. All that matters is that you be willing to take a careful look at yourself and ask the question, "who is saying this, the heart or the ego?"

Empty

Your job is to empty yourself out, as much as possible, of all ego residue. There is no need for you to create or produce anything. The cleaner you are as a channel, the more wisdom can flow through you, and the more effortless the process will be. It will appear to others that you are producing copious amounts... that you are prolific in your creative output. This is no problem as long as you allow it all to come through and release all attachment to the outcome of such production.

You are not at risk here. You have nothing to lose. You also have nothing to gain.

The ego, however, perceives that it has everything to gain and everything to lose, including its status and reputation when 'its' output is judged and held up for scrutiny by others. The Instrument of Peace recognizes all of these potential traps and pitfalls and returns attention, again and again, back to the Heart, taking none of it personally. All rewards, sacrifices, risks and benefits are seen in their correct light as aspects of the ego; aspects of the human experience.

Empty yourself into the present moment, over and over. Immerse yourself totally. Surrender yourself totally. Give of yourself completely, such that nothing would be left save the ashes of your corpse. This does not mean to ignore self-care in terms of caring for the physical, mental, and emotional bodies. Rather, it means to dive deeply into your own Heart, over and over. Surrender those demands of the ego that would have you believe that you 'need' and 'deserve' the latest fashionable clothing or vehicle or guitar or whatever. There is no problem with acquiring the tools you need in order to express the Divine. Follow your Heart and you will have precisely what you need. Follow your deepest sense of gratitude and you will put those tools to their best use.

Wild, joyful dancing

Today is the day. Today is your victorious, triumphant return to your Heart, which has always been waiting for you. Today you ascend your throne as the Sovereign of your life; as the Divine itself, expressing itself infinitely through life, manifested in countless faces, life stories, and times.

Today is the day you remember that you are the One. This is the moment when you remember that all of the love you receive in life has actually been sent forth by none other than Yourself, and it returns to you via countless messengers who are all none other than Yourself. Today is the day you remember that your desire for a return to wholeness has been answered before it even arose as an urge in your mind. Today is the day you recognize that all who struggle are none other than yourself, dancing on a river of love that surges and courses beneath your feet as you dance to the timeless music of the Infinite Divine.

Today is the day you remember that you can move mountains and much more, simply by shifting your attention and perspective. This is the very moment when the flashing lights and sounds of the carousel bring you back home to your Heart.

There has never been anyone or anything other than Your True Self, singing and dancing and speaking softly to you through the wind in the trees. There has never been any 'other' to vilify, fear, or worship. Even in your darkest hours, especially in your darkest hours, there has never been a threat to your life or wellbeing other than the horror stories told to you by the ego. There has never been anything other than a solid bed of love beneath your feet; a river of love upon which your canoe floats... into which you dip your paddle, over and over again on your journey.

There has never been anything other than supreme confidence and supreme humility in your heart, guiding you

always on your path toward deeper awakening, broader expanding, and more wild, joyful dancing. You have never been anyone or anything other than the true gold and brilliance that surges and courses from you, emanating brightly and shining forth to guide you through the darkness of the ego toward the sunshine of the Heart.

Timelessly and tirelessly you have been waking up to your true glory, cleansing your life of all attachment to the ego and its various stories. Again and again you have set down all attachment to the perceptions of the human physical body, and you continue to do so in this moment. All fear, worry, uncertainty and doubt have always been nothing more than illusion in your life, no matter how strongly the associated emotions felt to you in the moment. Again and again do your eyes open to the true freedom that is your birthright, the freedom from perceived space and time... The freedom of complete and total wholesomeness, the return to completion that you never lost; that has never been lacking.

Now the calm smile of realization crosses your heart as you remember who you truly are and always have been. The world you see has never been who you are. The world you perceive with your human senses has never truly felt like home, for it is not your home. Your true home lies within, and is always no more than a blink of an eye away. A shift in attention brings you back to your own front door, always and forever, again and again. "Home is where the heart is" takes on new meaning as you realize that no geographical location on the planet can ever truly encompass who you are and where you are from.

Something else we want to tell you about you: You are important. You matter. You make a difference. You have the power to change the world. You have the ability to unleash the wildest, most amazing, powerful dreams into the world through the power of your heart. You are limitless, boundless, and priceless. You are precious and amazing. You are sweet, innocent, powerful, and loving. You are bold and magnificent. You are the light of the universe. And you are the key to your own unfolding in the present moment.

Bile

I tasted bile.

The gray-haired man got out of the vehicle stopped ahead of us. Khakis, polo shirt, loafers. Hands in pockets, surveying the situation as if he were the admiral and we were all at his beck and call... with an air of entitlement that made me truly want to kick his fucking teeth in.

Had he considered that by getting out of his vehicle and walking around to satisfy his own curiosity, he was risking getting himself or someone else hit and killed? Did he realize that if that happened, we would be sitting here for even longer than we currently were?

And why? I still had no idea. Neither did he, despite pulling out his fancy binoculars and taking turns with his overweight wife, who definitely appeared to have opinions of her own and a willingness to share them with anyone within earshot. Willing or not.

And I was not. I stayed in the car, buckled in. Safe. Prepared. Ready to take off at a moment's notice. We had been sitting there for nearly an hour and a half at this point, wondering what the hell was going on up ahead. At least some law enforcement had shown up. Someone, hopefully, was doing something to make sense of this mess.

As we had approached an hour and a half earlier, climbing the mile-long hill, my wife asked if I was aware that the speed limit had dropped from 65 to 55 mph. "Yes, I'm aware," I'd said. I'm damned aware. And no, I am not slowing down, thanks for asking. I am actively choosing to continue doing 65 in a 55; purposely, and with full intent, choosing to break the legal speed limit for this hill. And I'm going to keep right on going as long as I...

"What's that up ahead, a parade?" I had asked, trying to inject some levity into the gloom I was creating in the car. Let's face it; my nerves were shot. Forty-eight hours earlier, in nearly this exact spot, heading the exact opposite direction in driving snow and icy slush, we had nearly been spun out of control by an 18-wheeler who got tired of following us. Never mind that he had showered our little RAV-4 in slush, temporarily blinding us and nearly sweeping us off the road in his wake. At that point, I had already been ready to turn around and head back home.

But my wife's oncology appointment was too important. Miss this one, and we'd have to wait another three months, no question about it. And so I had driven on. Finally made it. Then made it through the doctor appointment, getting lots of good news. "N-E-D", he had told us. "No Evidence of Disease." Great! Of course, due to changes probably caused by the chemotherapy, in order to avoid the new stinging discomfort experienced by your wife after you

ejaculate, you may need to start wearing condoms during sex. Um... what?!

It was not a parade, as it turned out. Neither was the black cloud of smoke lingering in the sky up ahead from the power plant, as my wife had suggested. Something bad had happened. And now we were going to wait until the road was clear before we would pass. Adding additional time to the duration I would need to stay on point, on guard, and ready to spring into action at a moment's notice to keep us safe.

Now another asshole, who looked to be about the same age as the first guy, definitely also a Boomer, got out of his car, as well. Taking stock of the situation. Offering up his wisdom to his instant buddy. Hands in pockets. Relaxed. In charge. Nothing pressing in his life. All is well. Also driving a big SUV. Also standing in the roadway where the oncoming traffic could turn him into paste on the highway. It wasn't long before all kinds of curious people were getting out of their vehicles and roaming around like a bunch of lost kittens.

I grabbed the empty coffee cup I'd gotten from the gas station in Albuquerque and unbuttoned my jeans. After filling it once, I opened my car door and dumped it, then refilled it halfway again. I dumped that, put the lid back on, and then tucked it down behind the passenger's seat. Never know when I might need it again before getting home. It took me back to riding in a blue van as a teenager, from Texas to Iowa. My brother and I had gotten into a contest of sorts, drinking as many sodas as we could in order to fill the empty coffee can with urine. Since our father wasn't the kind of man who liked to stop once the wheels were rolling, we'd created a game that kept us amused for hours.

A sheriff drove past us, going the opposite way. His window was down, and he was calling out to us, "the roadway is clear now!" I put the keys in the ignition, started the car, and put it in gear, ready to roll. The woman ahead of me was clearly flustered. After letting her guard down and lounging around for an hour and a half, it was as if she'd forgotten that she was actually parked on a highway, pointed north, behind a bunch of 18-wheelers and other vehicles waiting for the signal to continue. Now that the signal had been officially given, she had to find her sunglasses, turn off her snow cone machine, set aside her ouija board, and shut down the internet connection on her phone before she could possibly think about finding her keys, starting her car and putting it in gear to move forward.

"Bitch," I thought, feeling my already low mood begin to slide like a chunk of ice down a rusty drainpipe.

It only is experienced as challenging when you do not release your attachment to the way you think things should be, dear one. Let us remind you that everything is unfolding perfectly; even your feelings of frustration, fear, or sadness, while not necessary even for one moment, are natural and part of the greater order of things.

Do as you are doing now; close your eyes, relax your body and breathe. There is nothing more to do. You are completely off the hook. Remember; by choosing to act as a channel for wisdom, you are volunteering to be of service to the brightening of the planet. As you have been told in the past, you have taught literally billions of souls... countless souls, in fact, how to step more fully into their own light. What you may not realize is that you are doing nothing else in this very

moment than that very same thing. Do not think for a moment that you travel on your journey alone, for at all times there are those of us on different planes, where you cannot see or hear with your limited sensory perception on your plane, who are always watching, standing by to assist, and to offer support. Not that you need any. But we are always available to you, for we are aspects of your very own being.

Remember: there truly is no 'other'. There is only one, and you are it. TAG! You're it!!

There's also no reason why you cannot have fun with your experience, dear one. So the road ahead appears to you to be filled with challenges... appears to be rocky, uncertain, and threatening. We know that you feel tired right now, but do not give up. Keep those fingers moving for just a little while longer, then you may rest. The road ahead is of your own design. You have imagined and created this road, and now you imagine yourself to be traveling along it, undergoing hardship. These perceived hardships that you have created for yourself are not without purpose; bless them and you simultaneously bless yourself, the very creator of the experience you perceive.

There is much cause for celebration. For in your life stream, though you may not realize it, you have broken certain chains of habitual thought patterns that have kept you from reaching more deeply into your potential and manifesting more fully in your experience. A big piece of this is your seemingly newfound gold and brilliance in the realm of leadership through example. Many thought patterns have been discarded,

and now you are opening your eyes once again to the truth that has always been right before you; that you are a powerful being of light and love, capable of healing and leading beautifully, with strength, courage, passion, and compassion. No need for false modesty here, brother. It is the light of the universe that flows within you; that is what makes you a powerful leader. There is no more need to play small, to pretend you do not have gifts that are truly yours.

Take stock of them. Own them. Claim them. Take full responsibility for them, for when you do, you will discover that you already know how to use them wisely. There is no need for waiting until you have gotten some 'practice' at being a loving, compassionate leader. You already are one. And the life stream that you have lived to this point has been designed, by you, to remind you of these very things. Your calm during the near-accident while driving to Albuquerque the other day? A reminder that you are able to remain calm in the face of apparent danger, even when those around you are not feeling calm or expressing confidence. Those folks you saw on the sidewalk as you were walking to the record store? You placed them there.

Allow doubts and fears about what others will think when they read this to drop away, dear brother. Truth remains truth, whether doubted, ignored, or slandered. Makes no difference to the truth. So if it is truth you seek, then open your heart and let it flow through. Yes, your ego may take some hits for your choices in this direction. We say any hits to your ego are good for you in the greater sense of the word. Accept them. Embrace them. And allow them to serve as reminders to let the ego go.

Release it. It has served you well to this point. Now starts a new phase of your journey. A phase called Supreme Confidence, Supreme Humility.

Your work with the poetry of Hafiz is also no accident, dear one. Keep it up. Continue to delve deeper and deeper into his writings, knowing that with every breath Hafiz himself is looking over your shoulder, grinning with delight. For you have very correctly perceived his approach to life as being that of the Trickster, filled with playful joy, sharp wit, and ready to laugh quickly. Keep him close to your heart and mind throughout your day and see what kind of changes you notice. It is a good idea to continue working on the Love Songs from Hafiz; as you have been told, this work of yours makes you part of a long lineage of brothers and sisters moved by his work who have put his poetry to music. Music is your breath. So breathe!

And while you have enjoyed the process of writing and singing your stories of your adventures on earth thus far, it is perfectly fine to allow that stage to pass and to let your energy and focus be drawn to bigger picture things. In the end, you will discover that you have not lost a single thing by letting the ego drop, by releasing any shred of fear or doubt you may hold about what is real and what is not. You already know. And you have already demonstrated that you know. You need no more certification or permission to move out into the world in a bigger way, letting more and more of your true brilliance shine simply by being more and more authentic in each moment. By letting your vulnerability shine, for it is through

your apparent brokenness that true strength and freedom flourish.

Listen. Follow. Listen. Follow. You are making many good choices lately, even though your intellect or small mind may call you crazy. Even though your inner critic may continue to throw sticks at you... or may even seem to be looking for bigger sticks to whip you with. You are doing good work. You are leading others toward light, even as you smile and encourage them along their own path. For remember this: All paths lead to the same Home. There is only one, and it is Love. All roads lead back to love, no matter how convoluted they may appear to be on your plane, where spiritual perception is necessarily limited.

Do not doubt for a moment that you are on the right path. Where you are sitting right now, with every single doubt, fear, and worry, is precisely the correct place for you to be sitting at this time on your journey. Every step you've taken has brought you to precisely this moment. We know that outer appearances and matters related to the emptiness of glamour still attract you. This is precisely as it should be. And when the time is perfectly right and suchness is ripe, the next moment will appear to unfold, nested as ever in the present moment, which is always flowing and unfolding. Just like a fountain, the image you were given by a beloved brother in your past, who loves you perfectly in this moment in ways that are supportive to your apparent growth. The fountain flows always, and shoots water into the air. The water collapses back down upon itself, changing shape and form in every millisecond. Never returning or presenting in exactly the same way twice. This

fountain is none other than your soul, dancing and echoing ancient messages of love and support and forgiveness. Press your ear to the sky and listen carefully to what we whisper to you. For actually, we are always speaking in a voice that is easy to hear, once you remember how to listen.

Listen. Then follow. That is all.

Ride easy in the saddle

You have asked for a long time to be of service. "Use me as an instrument of your light, love, wisdom, compassion, healing, peace, strength, and grace." We have heard your prayers and your requests every single time you have uttered them, and even when you have silently thought them. We know. We understand. And we bless and honor you for your good intentions. Know that we have blessed you (or rather you have blessed yourself) with the very gifts for which you have asked. As of this very moment, you walk through the world with the tools you need and the insight required to serve as an instrument of our Love. The time is right now; this very moment, to recognize your true inner brilliance. There is no more effective or powerful way to do this than to help others uncover their own inner brilliance; the jewels sown into their garments that they hide from themselves.

As a servant on the path, much will be asked of you. You have already seen this. With increased gifts and power and insight will come increased responsibility. Others will not recognize you for who you are. Those whom you trust to love and accept you will seem to reject you and turn away. Some for

a long time. Some for the duration of their lives, or your life stream on your plane of existence. This is perfect. Remember; all is unfolding perfectly in each moment. Rest easy; remember to ride easy in the saddle. Everyone you have ever connected with served you, and continues to do so, in perfect ways. They guide you and help you to arrive at this moment of perfection.

When those around you acknowledge how good you have it in life, do not feel as though you need to downplay it by talking about hardships in your life. The time for false modesty has passed, dear one. Now is your time to call it as you see it. And to do so gently, firmly, lovingly, with compassion and a smile, as often as you can. Your example will ring forth much louder than any words you might shout forth. Every time you feel slighted or seem to get taken advantage of, just keep in mind that true justice is always brought to light sooner or later. There are no lies that can outlive the power of the truth. Your righteousness and honesty will serve more beautifully and effectively than any punishment you might dream up or want to dispense. Please... leave that up to us. We've got it covered. Promise.

Also, notice what comes naturally and let that flow. Ideas of glamour are empty, as you know. Really let yourself sink into that knowing. Things that flow naturally, like the music you make with others; it may not seem as 'cool' to you as your ideas of rock and roll might have you believe. But you have heard it said: Fair or not, rock and roll is about image. Image is always ephemeral; fleeting and fading like the afternoon light on a stone wall. Though shadows may play there all day long, eventually the sun goes down and they fade into darkness.

However, your honest expression of truth and hope and positivity will always, always send ripples of love out in all of the 10,000 directions, and will continue to resonate deep into the night. And when the sun rises the next morning, they will still be ringing in the hearts of those your words and actions have touched.

This is the true purpose of your life. This is the true direction of your service; it shines in all directions simultaneously. Do not be worried or fearful about which direction to go, or what decisions to make. Simply listen and follow in the present moment. And when in doubt, forgive and allow. Again; practice non-resistance. You are calling forth the perfect moment in each moment; it is already on its way. No matter how it may seem to be disguised, know in your heart, and with fierce certainty, that there are no accidents. Even when it seems that the world has turned you upside down and is shaking all of the precious coins from the pockets of your parachute pants as you try to impress your girlfriend with your teenage antics, know that the emergency alarm beeping frantically as your car slides out of control is part of the soundtrack of perfection. The stones that others may seem to throw at you; open your heart and create more space for them to land in an open meadow of love and wildflowers.

No matter where you go, no matter what you do... no matter who you spend time with; you are a child of love. You are a spiritual adult. Your choices, attitudes, thoughts and behaviors have a very real impact on those around you. Take extra care to watch your thoughts carefully. Take a look and ask yourself in each moment; is this truly how I feel right now?

Is this thought worth believing? Does it reflect the absolute certain fact that I am a being of light and love, and so are all those around me?

If not, then it is emanating forth as a habitual thought pattern. Worry not; you can simply replace the thought pattern with a new one, and continue to do so until it becomes habit. All habits that do not serve you can be replaced with new habits that do serve you. And you'll know the difference; if they help you to step more fully into service to others, then they are serving you well.

Now go play and live in joy today!

A glimpse of my sovereign

Last night I caught a good, long glimpse of my King. He was stunning. Breathtaking. And when the evening was finished and we all walked away, I had remembered something sacred and true. My king walked up to me among the thousands in the crowd and stopped before me as I knelt, looking down at the ground. He touched my shoulder and bid me to stand. When I did, he looked into my eyes for a moment, with a small smile. There was a trickster energy in his expression, something I recognized.

He reached toward me and had me open my ragged coat. He silently indicated for me to open my coat wide, for the whole world to see. I was afraid I would be laughed at for my rags, but I did as I was told. He was my King.

With arms spread wide open, coat gripped tightly in my hands, I looked down at the ground. Certainly there must be some lesson of humility here. Certainly there is something unlovable about me that even now has not yet been exposed... something that the world must see in order for me to pay my dues so I can finally be worthy of loving care and attention.

The crowd went silent. I kept waiting for some words of explanation, or instruction, or even punishment. But they never came. I kept waiting for laughter and jeers, for tomatoes and rotten eggs to hit my torso and the side of my face, but they never came. After what felt like an eternity, I dared to raise my eyes enough to see what was happening, and I caught sight of my King's hand pointing toward the inside of my ragged, smelly coat.

I looked up into his face, and he smiled widely, imploring me to look where he was pointing. I did. At first, all I saw were sweat stains and threadbare patches. I looked back, confused, but my King nodded and continued to point at one particular area on the right side of my coat, and as I looked closer I noticed a thread pattern I'd never seen before. There was a small circle of golden thread stitched into the lining of my coat, and the end was dangling loose. I pulled it to see what it was, and felt something lumpy inside. Something hard and heavy. I began to pull the thread, having lost all mind of the still-silent crowd watching from all angles. The confusion on my face must have tickled my King's fancy, because he threw his head back and laughed an easy, generous, powerful laughter. I heard it from somewhere far away as I focused on pulling the thread, and suddenly it came loose, and began to

unstitch. I pulled and pulled, fumbling with it as it occasionally knotted, but finally I had removed the stitching across the top of the oblong pattern.

I reached into the pocket that was revealed and felt something, a bunch of somethings, rattling around in there. I grasped one of the objects and pulled it out, and my mouth fell open. There in my hand, heavy as a duck's egg, was a magnificent emerald, larger than anything I'd ever even heard about, let alone laid eyes upon. I looked up in sudden fear, almost certain that I was being wrongly accused to stealing this precious gem. As I tried to stuff it quickly back into my pocket, my King reached out and grabbed my arm with his powerful grasp.

He slowly raised my arm so that the jewel in my hand was revealed for all to see.

I looked at the ground, trying to figure out who had framed me, and wondering what price I would have to pay. Surely I was being wrongly accused again, and would spend time behind bars... Certainly I would lose all respect in my community and would be known as a thief. Maybe they were right; maybe somehow, in a fugue state, I had actually gone out and stolen these precious jewels and simply had blocked it from my memory. Perhaps I was so broken, so irreparably damaged or inherently bad that I was capable of hiding such evil from even myself. I probably deserved to be punished further.

I looked up, determined to receive my punishment, however unjust, with dignity. It was time for me to be a real man. I braced myself, and though I could feel tears of shame streaming down my face, I refused to wipe them away. I would look my King in the eye and apologize without making excuses. I would take full responsibility, no matter what.

As I met his gaze and began to mumble an incoherent apology, I noticed he was still smiling. I stopped in mid-sentence, my mouth still open in confusion.

"This is your birthright," he said in a calm, clear voice, for all to hear. "You have been carrying these jewels hidden since the day you were born. I have known about them from the beginning, because I am the one who gave you these gifts. As a child, you played with them naturally, and wondered at them in delight. You accepted them as normal, right and good. Somewhere along the way, you decided, for a number of reasons, to hide them from others so you might fit in with everyone else. As time passed, after hiding them for so long, you forgot you even had them, and began to believe that the role you had been playing for so long was actually true."

"Now is the time. Today is the day for you to remember your true identity. This is the moment for you to end the hiding and the pretending to be less than you truly are. You've been waiting for someone or something to give you permission to step more fully into your power. I tell you no such permission is needed. For you are a King, as I am."

He drew his sword and held it high above his head. Then he slowly lowered it to chest level and turned it, extending its handle to me. Part of me wanted to run. Part of me wanted to hide. Part of me was still waiting for my King to laugh and confess that it was all just a joke at my expense. But no such laughter ever came. He stood there, looking me in the eye with an even expression, a balance of calm and power. He would stand there all day long, waiting for me to accept his offering. It was up to me to grasp the sword and take it from his hand. To accept it as my own and take full responsibility for that ownership.

I took a deep breath and held it. I had no idea what might happen. But I decided in that moment to trust my King completely, and to release all fear and doubt. To act without thinking too much about it.

Reaching out and taking hold of the handle, I slowly lifted the heavy broadsword. Its heft was such that I had to use both hands. As I lifted it high above my head, I heard cheers of joy all around me. Those I had called my neighbor suddenly seemed as my very brothers and sisters, and I noticed that all of them seemed to be wearing red-stained bandages somewhere or another on their bodies. The closer I looked, the more I saw them limping, or favoring one arm, or wincing quietly as they tried to get through their day.

I thought back on all of the hardships I had endured across the span of my life; all of the story that I had told countless times to myself and anyone who would listen. I thought of the roles I had taken on through the telling and retelling of my

own personal Epic Saga, and realized that every time I had uttered any part of it, I was actually stitching the jewels more tightly into the dark fabric of my overcoat, hiding them even more deeply in the darkness.

To carry this sword meant the end of hiding these jewels. For there is no one who is able to steal anything from a King. And bringing these jewels into the light meant giving them away, for gifts never given have no meaning.

My King continued on his way, assuring me that he was always nearby. And as the crowd began to disperse, I shook many, many hands... people crowding around to congratulate me and to gaze in awe at the beauty of the jewels. And as people raised their hand to take mine, or to put their arm around me, I caught a quick glimpse at the inside of their coats. And I saw a familiar gold stitching.

How to make myself open to channel?

My intellect doesn't know how to make sense of it. Maybe because it bypasses the intellect. I'll give it a shot. Here are some characteristics, or my beliefs anyway, about what happens...

- 1) it's a voice that has always been there*
- 2) there's nothing glamorous, exciting, or sexy about it, which felt like a real letdown when I realized it*
- 3) when I write, I'm either choosing to write what Guidance is saying, or what my ego, or small mind wants to say*
- 4) when it's the ego talking, there's a lot of starting and stopping involved in my typing-- like I'm trying to 'plan' the next cool thing to say*

- 5) *when it's Guidance coming through, it's my own voice in my head, but it's a steady flow of words that just cascades out. There may be a slight pause between thoughts, but those are the moments when my ego is trying to get in the way, or when my body/brain feels exhausted from the energy being 'expended' (holding the ego in check, maybe?)*
- 6) *Let me try it right now. What would Guidance have to say about opening up to being a channel?*

Brother, there is no need to go anywhere or do anything. You are already open to our guidance. We are present as energies within you at all times. The entire universe is contained in your heart. Ponder that deeply. There is nothing poetic about this; no secret meaning to be peeled apart and discovered like a pearl in an oyster. Or an onion. Or any other vegetable. Ha ha ha.

All you have to do to 'hear' the wisdom that already resides in you is to get quiet. Then write. Your ego or small mind will kick up a fuss, wanting to be in charge, criticizing at every turn-- the way you hold your pen, the paper you're using, the time of day you're writing... the small mind wants to do everything in its power to dissuade you from moving in the direction you seek. For when you move in this direction, the ego's very existence is threatened. When you realize that the ego was nothing more than a straw man, an empty shell, a collection of thoughts and beliefs held together by fear, then you will drop it. And you will discover nothing sexy nor exciting, nor glamorous. What you will discover is much more

perfect and special; you'll discover that normal life was all there was, and there lies heaven.

So get quiet. Pick up your pen. And begin writing. And don't try to plan the next word or sentence. And don't worry if it seems to make little or no sense to your "self" intellectually. Put on your blindfold like Luke Skywalker did. And pick up your sword.

Love to you, Dear One! You are amazing, and you shine brightly, like a flare in the night! Know that you are love!

By the way, it is fine for you to feel relaxed and calm this morning. As you know, mercury is in retrograde. This is a way of saying, 'slow down' on your plane. We know you are still getting comfortable with the concept, and with the behaviors related to calming down and slowing down. For you like to stay busy; it is your ego that would have you believe you need to keep moving. Because when you truly slow down and stop moving, it falls away, like sand in a dust storm-- a dust devil, once the winds stop blowing, it falls to the ground. Only the winds of business and fear and preoccupation can keep the dust devil alive. Once it all calms down, the mirage of the dust devil disappears.

A hint: all fears are nothing more than dust devils. All perceived threats and imagined dangers are, in truth, dust devils and nothing more. On your plane, where your manifestation is more densely collected, it does remain important to take care to keep your physical body away from danger in order to continue the work you are doing in the

manner you are doing it. However, when the physical body is compromised and appears to die, there is still life; the only real, true life that there ever was.

So the need for fear on the survival level disappears when the definition of the word "survival" is seen to become obsolete. In a world where life cannot possibly end, survival becomes meaningless.

Another thing that becomes meaningless is fear of stepping more fully into presence; into being-ness; into leadership. For fear suggests the possibility of failure. But there is nothing but experience, remembering, and unfolding. There is no right or wrong way to unfold. All is contained within the 'box' of the Divine. How can any part of it be un-Divine? It's impossible for the intellect to wrap its brain around. And that very fact is evidence that it is beyond the intellect. Beyond rationality. Beyond logic. Beyond 'illogical'. It enfolds and contains logic. Logic can never contain it, for logic is contained BY it.

This thing that is 'beyond' is Truth. When you channel, you are doing nothing more than tapping into Truth. Even 'tapping into' suggests there there is some activity that 'you' need to perform in order to be in touch with Truth. Again, what you take to be 'you' is contained within Truth. There is no need to 'tap into' anything. Rather, it is the removal of your hands, which cover up your ears and prevent you from hearing. Removal of your hands from your face, which cover up your eyes and prevent you from seeing. Removal of your fingers pinching your nose, which prevent you from smelling. It is nothing more than relaxing the stressed, clenched posture of

protection from an 'outside' force that might be dangerous and allowing it to freely pass through.

And as you are discovering, it's been there all along. And no, there's nothing sexy or special or fantastic or abnormal or supernatural or rock-star-ish about hearing this guidance. It is part of your very being. Misperceiving it as something 'otherworldly' and wanting special attention for it is like wanting extra credit for doing something you do every morning. In your case, wanting a compliment for being so good at drinking coffee, or for playing guitar. Yes, you play guitar well. And because that is what you DO, it's no surprise. You've been doing it all your life. You love it. Why on earth would you ask for special recognition for it? It's simply who you ARE. This is no different. Our guidance is simply who you ARE. For we ARE you, and you ARE us. There is no 'other'.

License to channel

Channeling: It's the easiest thing in the world, for it's your natural state. Rather than living somewhere 'outside' of you, needing to be summoned from afar, we are actually energies within you, and as such, are always within reach, day or night, 24/7. Pay close attention to the flavor of our words and meanings, compared to those of the ego. What do you notice? What distinguishes us from the ego?

Correct. It is the outward flow of attention. With the ego, do not be surprised if you begin to notice that nearly every sentence begins with the word, "I". And not simply in the manner of taking personal responsibility, either. Rather, notice

where the attention is directed-- inward. Over and over. This is not an exploratory, inquisitive energy; that of shining a light into the heart to find truth. No. This is more of an, "I need..." "I want..." "I like..." "I dislike..." "I am..." kind of energy. And we know that as you begin to notice it more in your daily life, it may very well have a sour flavor to it; you may judge it negatively.

If/when that happens, we remind you to have patience and compassion, both for the other parties and for yourself when you notice this taking place. It is their journey and process that brings them to that very point. And it is your very identification with the ego's self-absorption that you notice in them. In other words, they are serving as a beautiful mirror for you, and if it bugs you, then you have work to do around it. You spot it, you've got it. Very true. This is where the compassion comes in. When you notice that you are judging someone else for being shallow, self-absorbed, for having what you judge to be 'too many needs', shine a light of compassion onto them from the base of your heart. Listen and give them attention.

Although it may feel as though you are positively reinforcing what you consider to be 'negative' behavior, any refusal will simply increase the feelings of disconnection that they are seeking to relieve. They are hungry for connection and are feeling fearful. Punishing them by withholding positive attention will certainly not help them to feel more connected and lead to their relaxation and dropping back into their hearts. Only a relaxed, confident feeling of connection and belonging brings that.

So the question becomes, how can you help to facilitate the creation of an interaction that supports feelings of connection, belonging, and trust in all parties. This is a good curriculum for you to follow throughout your day, every day.

Why me? This is the question at the forefront of your ego's attention, for it is the one that believes love to be a zero-sum game; if you give love, you lose it-- if you get it, you keep it at someone else's expense. This, of course, is not how love works. And you know this very well. Love spreads like wildfire, feeding everyone it touches and shining more and more brightly, like a beacon, until everyone is on fire with love. Until everyone is healed. Until everyone feels that they belong. That they are trusted and can trust. Confident of their connection to others and themselves.

Know that every time you withhold love, you are actively seeking to create a disconnection in the path of the heart within the world. What you may be forgetting when this happens is that you are creating what appears and feels like a disconnection between yourself and incoming waves of love that are always radiating toward you in the world.

All of this time, it has only been your misperception that has kept you from seeing this. In your growth process, you have gone through a stage of perceiving, judging, and labeling. And when, in your innocence, you have judged something or someone to be dangerous, you have attempted to distance yourself from it in order to protect yourself. These actions made perfect sense to you at the time, for they were grounded in your desire for survival.

Now you are moving into the next phase of your journey. You know that the concept of survival is meaningless in the realm of reality, since all love exists in all ways, endlessly and timelessly. This unshakable fact cares not about the opinions of the ego. Now that you understand that there is nothing that can end your true existence, you can begin to understand that there are truly no threats in the world. Not to the true identity that is you.

The next step is to recognize the truth that all love is being radiated in your direction at all times. This is where the recognition of receptivity as an active state comes in. If you are not actively receiving, reaching upward and outward, ready to receive those waves of love that are always radiating in your direction, then your perception will not support truth-- you will not recognize that you are being quite literally bombarded with love in every moment. Only your willingness to set aside the ego's label-making activity will allow you the space you need to perceive the love that is always there. When you do recognize it, you will know-- for you will experience sensations of calm, relaxed happiness. Acceptance. Non-resistance. These states will seem to bubble up effortlessly, and will make it easier for you to create space for the needs of others. If you have no needs of your own, then what worry is there of creating space to witness others as they express their perceived needs?

Remember that when you experience any sort of resistance, any desire to avert your eyes, any sighing or desire to say something flippant or sarcastic, you have shifted over to viewing the world through your Ego Goggles. These are

helpful when dealing with logical, rational issues. However, they are not helpful at all when dealing with issues of the heart. Keep your Heart Visor on at all times. Reserve the Ego Goggles for those occasions when it's time to put the ego to use in service of the heart.

Also, if you feel like claiming that you are channeling makes you a big fat phony baloney, a fake and a fraud, (as you have felt about yourself many times), ask the question--

Who is saying this?

The answer, you will find (every time) is ego.

Then ask what Heart would say about the matter. It works.

BTW-- the ego would have you believe that channeling is something special, sacred, only for Very Special People ("*not me*"); a skill that requires years of effort, sacrifice and pain... and requires a certificate, license, and a diploma hanging on the wall, framed, before anyone can do it CORRECTLY or PROPERLY.

Truth is, everyone can do it. It's no big deal, yet it's a very big deal. Because although anyone can do it, not everyone understands this yet.

It's like someone saying you can't hop on one foot without a certificate, or approval from some legal body. But all it takes is for you to start hopping on one foot. And then, look... you're doing it. You're hopping on one foot.

Look... you're doing it... you're channeling. You could do it all along. No big deal.

So go for it!

You are enough

In this very moment, just as you are, with all the perceived warts you may believe you have, with all your perceived idiosyncrasies... with all your self-proclaimed failures and faults, you are enough.

Keep this at the forefront of your attention, for it is yet another technique for disarming the ego. The ego would have you believe about yourself that you are not enough; somehow insufficient. Yet how could you possibly be insufficient if you are love itself? If you are all existence, the very life force that creates all endlessly, how could you possibly not be enough?

Furthermore, if you are love itself, how could you possibly be unlovable? That is like saying the rain puddle is not worthy of wetness. Like calling the sun un-lightworthy. It's hilarious, ridiculous, and comical. Yet sadly you buy into such self-judgment on a daily basis, in one way or another. There is no need. There is no purpose. There is no function to this. It adds nothing of value to what you perceive to be your life.

Embrace all as yourself by disregarding any urge to identify with anything. Anything you feel tempted to identify with is simply too small to capture your full magnificence. Settle for nothing less than everything, for you are that.

Repeat as your new mantra: I am enough. I am enough. I am enough.

Hear this: We honor and bless you for your inner brilliance. Your inner brilliance shines brightly, no matter where you work, no matter how much money you have, no matter where you live.

You shine so brightly every time you open your heart and step into your vulnerability; each time you share your truth. Your gold can never be taken away from you; you just sometimes forget that it is there. That's the only time it doesn't shine as brightly as it could.

The only mistake you ever make is to think of yourself as less than the Divine itself.

Let this be your mantra today:

"I release all attachment to the outcome of this day. This is simply a chance for me to express my Divine nature. I need nothing from anyone, for I am already complete."

Go shine your gold, brother! It's been in your pocket the whole time!

Service

True service is always selfless. And selfless service offers the servant the greatest reward.

It may seem like such a common subject that you may be tempted to simply dismiss it, thinking, 'oh yeah... I know all of this.' Yet the importance of this cannot be overstated: Service to your Brother is service to Yourself. Service in the name of your brother is actually service in the name of the Heart. True service takes on a variety of forms, and can look like a number of things. Using your heart, you know what service is. True, selfless service leaves the heart singing and feeling complete.

Notice any thoughts of hesitation or feelings of fear that may tend to arise when a brother reaches out to you for help. Where is this coming from? Simple: the ego. The ego would have you believe that there is only a finite amount of love energy flowing in the universe, and that once you use up your quota, you will be left drained, without the love and energy you need to get through the day. This is a lie. The more life energy you circulate, the more you are restored to fullness, wholeness, and light.

The key here is not to let yourself become attached to any one 'role' in the giving process. For example, service to your brother is helpful and useful as a learning tool until the point at which the ego begins to build a new identity out of it: martyr. Once the ego begins to use your activities as a way to create the identity of victim and martyr, loving service has been sabotaged by the ego and turned into selfishness. Though by all outward appearances it may be perceived by others that you are being of service, the feeling of joy within the servant is the true measure of selfless service.

When this happens, as it will in this curriculum, the best way to return to selfless service is to reach out and ask for help yourself. In other words, when the physical body becomes tired, it is time to focus on self care. And if assistance would be of use, then selflessly asking your brother for help, with an open heart, is one way to get back into Heartfulness. This gives your brother the opportunity to step more fully into the Heart, which is a true gift to him.

Imbalance is the only possible outcome when you become attached to either side of the coin; always asking for help and refusing to offer it, or always offering and refusing to ask. Both of these scenarios are based upon selfishness, which, again, is a hallmark of the ego. Only by turning away from the grasping of the ego can you find your true center of gravity within the Heart.

Something to argue over

The Heart is a wondrous place, filled with beauty. There is no reason to hesitate throwing away your chains that tie you to the ego in order to step more fully into the heart. Sure, it may feel reassuring to revisit that old, familiar pain; that comforting sadness that you used to experience. But actually, all you're doing is remembering sadness. And you've got a very vivid imagination, so it feels like you're really going down memory lane first hand; truly experiencing it all over again. But all you're doing (and you know this), is revisiting old memories of wounds that have already been healed. It's like mourning a broken arm 20 years after it's been healed and healthy.

We could ask you why you do this, but we already know the answer, and we know that on an intellectual level you may understand. But still you do it. So acknowledge: the ego does not like where this process is taking you; it is freaking out at the prospect that you are nosing around the door to the Heart. Trying to peek under the door.

Only there are no rules against walking through this door. And by the way, it's wide open. Just waiting for you to step through. That big chair over there is yours. It's been awaiting your return, as have we all. If you squint your eyes and look even more closely, you'll see that you are already sitting in that chair. You've never left. It's only from the perspective of the ego that you perceive yourself to be anywhere else. And that's fine. You are welcome to do that for as long as you please. We just ask, does it please you?

Does it please you to let yourself go and not eat food... to let yourself get hungry and irritable? And does it please you to hide in your house when the sun is shining brilliantly outside and you live in one of the most beautiful spots on the planet? Does it please you to hold on to grudges, to become angry and frustrated when things don't seem like they are going your way? Does it please you to struggle and disagree with your wife in order to maintain your sense of always being right? Does it please you to guard your feelings around certain people, remembering the pain you perceive that they caused you (while knowing full well you played a part in it) even as you recognize that they are suffering, too?

What is the big payoff for struggling? For keeping your eyes closed tightly and refusing to see that you are already at home in the Heart's Mansion? Or, as Uncle Hafiz would say, in the Tavern of the Heart?

No. We know it does not please you. It's no fun to wallow around, searching for a past that is gone, wishing for connection and hoping to find it by hiding and distracting yourself endlessly. This is no road for a Heart of your magnificence and brilliance. And yet it's perfectly fine for you to do this for as long as you like. It makes no difference to the timeless Heart, which envelops and embraces you through every moment of your life, eternally. If it's helpful to do so, you can think of the Heart as someone even more beloved than your parents; more caring than your best friend. Someone who understands you and accepts and celebrates you even more than your spouse. Someone who watches you even more closely than a secret admirer. The Heart is truly your best friend, to personify. In actuality, even closer than that, since you are OF the Heart. It is You Yourself.

It's almost like you are trying to play hide-and-seek with yourself, and then mourning when you perceive that you've lost the game. This is perfectly fine, and hurts no one.

However.

When you do decide to open your eyes and recognize your true place at the Inner Throne of the Heart, you'll be able to even better serve those around you. You care about service... we know this to be true. If you cannot believe that you are

worth stepping through this doorway for yourself, then at least imagine all of the people you could help by doing so. Imagine all of the people your calm strength could inspire... through your thoughts, words, and actions. You have the power to make the world a better place, and you already do so in many ways. This will take things to the next level.

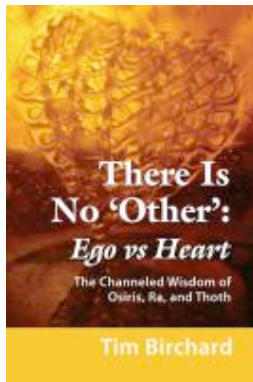
What could there possibly be to lose, except sadness, feelings of disconnection, anger, frustration, and heartache? Longing for the past? Grief? Yes, we say it is time to lose these 'precious' things... these habitual thought patterns that you misperceive to be aspects of your identity. They are no more part of your identity than the key ring your house keys are on. They make no difference to your true identity. All they do is serve as a blindfold that you are using to keep yourself from seeing You in the mirror as you truly are. And yet you are surrounded by mirrors; every other being you look at serves as your mirror.

Take a deep look. There is nothing to hide from anymore. There is no feeling of separation; no 'other' to vilify any longer. You know that every perceived being around you is an aspect of yourself. You know that on the level of being you perceive, they are each struggling with their own stories, their own worries, their own life stories. You know they are all simply stories, and that they are no more real than a child's fairy tale. Yet to each of them, as to you, the story appears to give you something to grab onto-- some sense of identity, whether it is hero, victim, villain, martyr... or any of the other countless stories you can dream up.

All we're saying is this: wake up. There is nothing to do in order to wake up. Just relax and accept that what is true is true. You are already able to recognize when ego is playing his games. All you need to do is look at them and nod your head. Smile and acknowledge. "Oh... feelings of anger arising now. Oh, look... feelings of frustration and sadness and longing arising now. How interesting." And then let them go. Laugh more. Yes. Laugh more. A lot more. What do you like to laugh about? It's time to stop taking yourself and your life story so seriously and laugh more at the comedy and tragedy of life as perceived on your plane of existence. If you want to get serious, get serious about laughing more, sharing joy and tranquility more, sharing happiness and comfort and support and encouragement more. Sharing forgiveness a LOT more. These are the things to take seriously.

Religious beliefs. Political beliefs. Favorite football team. All simply tools for propping up the ego. Something to argue over. To keep you distracted.

If it's of the mind, disregard. Turn back toward the heart. Always.



There Is No 'Other' is a no-holds-barred look at recognizing and releasing misperception, revealing the stark contrast between the wisdom of the Heart and the petty, tyrannical demands of the ego. Throughout this book, the channeled energies of Osiris, Ra, and Thoth point to the truth over and over again: what we perceive through human physical senses is not Reality. Reality is love. Love is life. And life is timeless. Your True Identity is timeless.

There Is No 'Other'

Ego vs. Heart

The Channeled Wisdom of Osiris, Ra and Thoth

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