

Spiritual Freedom – Remembering our Authentic Self

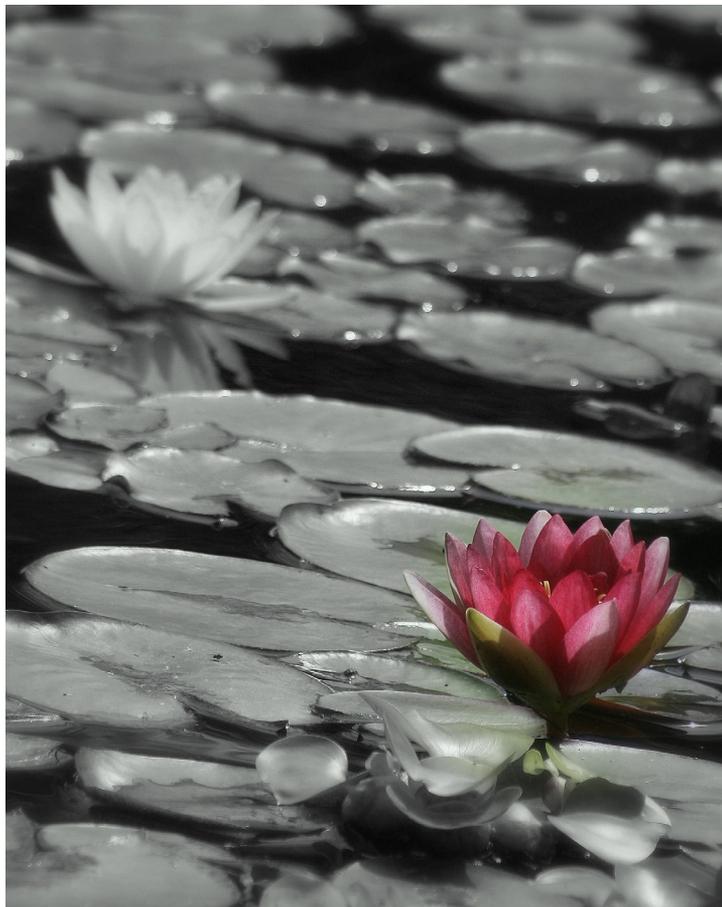
By Taron Puri, B.A., LL.B.

While reflecting on 'what is spiritual freedom?' lyrics to two songs from the past sprang from my psyche and propelled themselves into the forefront of my mind. The first, from the award winning series *Born Free*, begins with 'Born free, as free as the wind blows, as free as the grass grows, born free to follow your heart...!' The second song by Paul Colwell entitled *Freedom isn't Free* says, "Freedom isn't free, freedom isn't free, you gotta pay a price...You've gotta sacrifice, for your liberty". So which one of these lyrics speaks the truth?

On the one hand, if we are born free, then spiritual liberation simply means 'remembering' this truth and letting go of all that which tells us otherwise! Alternatively, if liberation demands both a price and a sacrifice, then the key question becomes one of how much? Yet, this whole question becomes moot when I consider the truth of the saying that 'we are spiritual beings having a human experience'!

Who Am I?

As spirit, we are not bound by time, space or the myriad of limitations and challenges endemic to the human experience. The human body, our space suit, facilitates our spiritual quest to experience this world through all of the body's senses, and ultimately learn and grow from all of our experiences. Essentially, we are two consciousnesses, the spiritual and the human, interlinked as one for the purposes of experiencing this phenomenal world. The confusion occurs however when we become body identified and mistake our human form as being solely who we are – limited beings living in bondage and needing to become free. In ancient texts, this 'forgetting' that we are spirit first, is a function of what is called 'Maya', aptly



defined by the learned as 'the fact of the illusion'. It is said that like a movie set, our world to our human senses appears, and is, real; yet, ultimately, it is only a set upon which we learn life's lessons, and from which we will graduate with experiences intact.

To illustrate, a mentor of mine gave me an exercise to do upon waking in the morning. I would wake up and go look at myself in the bathroom mirror. Then instead of saying, "There I am", I would say "There is my body"; and I would replace "How do I look/feel today?" with "How is my body looking/feeling today?" By patiently doing this exercise, I became conscious of myself as spirit, and realized that regardless of

how 'real' the body's world appears, it is not the ultimate reality. This gave me perspective, and allowed me to stay centered, calm, and detached during challenging times. I now knew that beyond the veils of Maya, we are free beings inhabiting a human body on temporary loan from the universe. It is given to us at birth and taken from us at death – the point at which 'I', as spirit, simply move to the next assignment.

The practice of remembering

Once you realize that you are a spiritual being having a human experience, you can activate this knowing by doing the foregoing exercise yourself. In addition, there are hundreds of ways to get connected to your authentic self. What is required on your part is a desire to go deeper within and invest the time, energy, and discipline to embark on this most rewarding journey. Perhaps that is the 'price and sacrifice' which is called for in the lyrics of *Freedom isn't Free*!

Here are some tips to assist you in remembering and

connecting with your authentic self. Consider these to be a primer, opening the way to a rich and rewarding adventure in finding your way back home:

1. Recognize that if something is 'yours', it isn't 'you'. Therefore, when you say "This is my body", then ask yourself, who said that? By doing this, you will realize that you are not your body, mind or thoughts, but rather, that you are a spiritual being, who through this body, is having a human experience.

2. Spend five minutes daily in meditation, with the central theme of reacquainting yourself with your authentic self. Choose a quiet, comfortable space, close your eyes and say 'hello' to yourself as spirit. And then just listen. With patience, you will more and more often, begin to experience yourself as spirit first. This will result in your approaching life from a healthier perspective.

3. Create a buddy system with a close friend or two and agree to remind each other when you become entangled in life's challenges, that although the challenges are real and need to be dealt with, you can do so with healthy detachment, remaining centered and calm.

4. Embrace the present moment. Ask yourself throughout the day "Where am I". Typically, our human consciousness keeps us volleying back and forth between the past and the future, both of which do not exist. The only thing that is real is the 'present', and it is here, where spirit lives. Therefore, by mastering the art of living in the present, we can experience life as it was meant to be, as spiritual beings having a human experience!



Life Strategist, Stress Management Expert and former Immigration Judge, Taron Puri, B.A. LL.B, shows individuals & organizations how to effectively stay stress free in a crazy world. Working globally as a Speaker, Trainer and Personal Coach, he excels at turning negatives into positives and making sense of life's most challenging issues. To learn about Recession Proofing Yourself, and to share your thoughts and comments, visit www.recessionproofyourself.org, and www.energyinmotion.org

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COUPLES' RETREAT

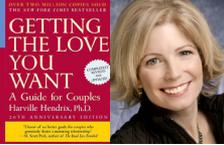
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