



“The Wizard of Oz”: Dorothy, Toto the dog, the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman and the Lion on the yellow brick road to Emerald City

Responsibility

The world is a stage and we are all actors. Each actor plays a unique part and is responsible for his/her own actions. Responsibility means doing the right thing no matter how big or small the task may be. Each one of us has a special role to play in the making the world a better place.

Going Beyond

If the **quality of my thoughts** can influence my physical health, the atmosphere around me and my relationships, it will definitely **affect my relationship with God**. Unlike physics in which dissimilar forces (positive and negative) attract each other, the basic principle of spirituality is that similar forces attract each other. **If my mind is caught up in cycles of negativity, the dissimilarity between me and God will create distance between me and Him**. With the awareness of being a soul, a being of spiritual energy, spiritual light, I begin to have a certain amount of mastery over my own thoughts and their quality. Also, the process of finishing negativity is accelerated. Just stepping away from the limited consciousness of the body and bodily connections (not leaving them) stops negative thinking in the same way as by just putting a switch on, a light is turned on and darkness finishes.

If explorers had never ventured beyond their home countries, they would have remained firm in the belief that the rest of the world simply didn't exist. In the same way, **if I allow myself to stay only within the physical and limited sphere of thinking, then I would declare that there is nothing beyond**. It is when I make the effort to go outside the boundaries of my previous thinking, that I have the chance of discovering more. The quest for a source of love, truth and beauty - the Supreme eventually brings me to the necessity of looking beyond not only my own body, but also other human beings and matter itself. **Through the practice of seeing the self as an eternal soul and disciplining my mind I create the possibility of discovering the existence and nature of God and having a deep relationship with that One**.

Soul Sustenance

Discovering Inner Compassion (Kindness) –Part 3

When we try to describe compassion, it is worth looking at the words **sympathy**, **empathy** and **interpathy**.

Showing **sympathy** towards another person's suffering is acknowledging their suffering, for example, 'I am sorry that you have hurt yourself'. We recognize that they are injured or ill without really engaging at a feeling level.

Empathy is when we literally share a feeling with someone, *we walk in their shoes*, for example, 'I feel really upset that you are so depressed about losing your job'. This can bring great comfort to the person we are empathizing with, but the comfort to them can be at our expense and leave us feeling emotionally drained or sad. If we identify too closely with them, it can also make it difficult for us to help them.

An expansion of empathy is a word called **interpathy** where we relate to another's suffering although we may not understand why they are suffering. This may be because they are from a different culture or because their feelings may seem inappropriate given the situation, but we are curious, we try to understand.

Compassion is all these words — **sympathy**, **empathy**, **interpathy** - yet it is more and it is less. We acknowledge someone's sorrow, we sense how they feel, we try to understand how it affects them, yet with compassion we do not become emotionally involved. We are engaged yet detached. We are standing back and looking on with kindness. By showing compassion in this way, it allows us to be compassionate without suffering from compassion fatigue or emotional burnout.

Message for the day

To change means to experience progress.

Expression: Whenever there is a desire to bring about a change, there is also a simultaneous intense feeling to find a change instantly - and fully. Yet this does not always happen. However, true change is that in which there is at least a little change. When there is constant effort put in to be better and to do better, then naturally the best results are visible, even if there is not perfection seen overnight.

Experience: When I bring about a change constantly, in whatever little way I can, I am able to experience constant progress. I do not have great expectations, but will be satisfied with the little changes that I make and will have the confidence to go on putting in effort. Even with the little results that I attain I will be able to take encouragement constantly. I am thus able to move on towards perfection.