



# TINDERBOX

SPIRITUAL BEINGS BEING HUMAN

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*It is the time of year when our minds continually ask us to Keep Going! Time is Limited! Don't Just Sit There, Do Something!! But our Spirit has a different message - see if you can hear yours . . .*

## Be your own Christmas Tree

### I am or we are?

THE CHOICE of the appropriate subjective pronoun when writing of human experience is a perennial dilemma for many writers; and it is an interesting one too because it pauses us to contemplate what separates us and what marks us an individual.

It points towards our view of reality and the subtle shift from duality to unity that is the evolutionary spiritual path for humanity. When our little spark chooses union over separation and taps into its mother-lode source, it substantially augments its power and light.

How blessed we are to be living at such a time when it has never been so easy to wake up and experience varying degrees of the unity consciousness that was attained by the enlightened seers. Scattered throughout human history such luminous spiritual masters have walked this earth, inspiring us to realise our own potential.

If we dedicate ourselves, we too can ride on the back of their extraordinary effort and sacrifice through a sort of osmotic energy entrainment.

The speed of modern day information exchange has enabled all seekers to align with the pervasive tide of the collective mind as it accumulatively rises to higher states of the consciousness and this doesn't necessitate rigid adherence to the austerities of the ascetic, though it doesn't preclude the path of abstinence either.

### Mass hallucination of reality

To diminish the innate gifts and talents that our singular, unique spark can contribute to the whole is unintentional; however anything we say about "I" is bound to have some ego involved that is understood by the awakened Self to be just a cluster of thoughts from the false self.

Forgive me for breaking my own literary rule and using the intermitted first person pronoun instead of my usual collective "we"; however I endeavour to use it with awareness of "inclusivity", to demonstrate that my own personal experience here is but a reflection of a more universal human experience. As each state of consciousness unfolds within us as individuals, it opens us into a more universal expanded reality.

### Don't just do something, sit there

"How can I write yet another Christmas message?" I ask myself amidst so much going on and the impending festive season, that is already so inundated with cheerful sentiment too often perceived as meaningless or false. More importantly how can I make my message meaningful and authentic? It seems like a big ask when there is always somewhere to go, somewhere to be and someone to see.

The mind/ego dictates, "Don't just sit there, do something!" It is always impatient, because it views time as limited. I am determined to try and reverse my habitual urgent perspective of life and remember that Spirit is patient because it knows it is eternal. I am willing to trust it to be my guide and internal compass to lead my mind past its conditioned state to its pure unconditioned state.

### Consulting the inner oracle

I need to withdraw the spotlight of my attention away from the theatrical lure of competing thoughts to seek a truth that dwells somewhere in the stillness and lucidity that prevails *between* thoughts.

I wanted to share this enquiry of finding my inner voice and I figured that if I paid good attention to the process itself; of being receptive to a message, then maybe the message would take care of itself.

Experience has shown me how the moment that I surrender and release what I most desire is often the moment when enough space is created for it to come flowing in. After all, the universe is in constant communication with the stilled mind.

### It's mayhem in there...

Sometimes it can be mayhem in my mind, awhirl with tyrannical thoughts all telling me what I should be doing or not doing; I am not alone, this is an entrenched pattern that afflicts all of humanity.

In fact if this almost comical, uncensored inner prattle were to be publically exposed, we would all be committed as insane.

"Come back to your breath," echoes an inner voice from ahigh, still recognisable amidst the cacophony. The immediacy of the body and senses would come to my rescue. Gentle coaxing of the breath to flow longer, deeper and more slowly would allow it to more competently calm the mental chatter and to settle on the single thought of a Christmas message.

### Finding the stillness inside

It was evidently necessary to remove myself from the distractions of busy, everyday life to find a quiet, special space of verdant beauty where nature has asserted herself. If I could return to that familiar sense of tranquillity and silence, I might have the possibility to experience what message arises.

Nature always holds my answers as I wander, watch, soften, breathe and explore my visions, questions and dreams. Amongst the peaceful presence of old trees, a source of water and myriad plants with all the elements harmoniously balanced, I would draw some inspiration by surrendering to the moment with body and breath to experience life afresh, and hopefully discover my Christmas message.

### The current of creation

I breathe in the fragrant recycled air from the plants that are saturated in life-force and feel it flooding into my cells to percolate there, animating them to wake up; even stagnant areas come alive and eventually relax into a honed sensation like having no body. The acuity of my senses quickens, as I inhale Nature and the sensual world like soul sustenance to then exhale "me" and I begin to see through the eyes of the body. I feel the current of creation coursing through subtle channels; singing as it flows like liquid light, nourishing my entire being. I am tentatively teetering on the next level of still-mind where I am what I am experiencing right here now without any mental commentary.

### Hold on to nothing

I witness my attachment and how fettered I am to cascades of desires. I remind myself that I already am the spacious silent presence unaffected by thoughts, feelings, sense im-

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# Where does my body end and nature begin?

## FROM PAGE 1

pressions, intuitions, insights, inspiration and motivations that come and go, just as the spiritual masters described.

"You only lose what you cling to," they chant in my head, as I become hollow like a bamboo and release my expectations and thoughts about the message, letting them go to hold on to nothing.

It becomes clear that my thought-burdened mind would not give me the message I was seeking and I would have to descend deeper to merge with the sensorial heart-scape to explore my feelings there.

Somehow when we redirect the normal flow of our awareness from the outside world to our interior world, it seems to reach a point where horizons are so broadened that the exterior we left behind is included and there are no exclusions that separate.

## Where no lines are drawn

I start to experience the whole universe as my physical body, through my senses, as one single reality of being as I cease to identify with my individual body-mind.

This luminous, joyous space beyond the mind is intrinsically "unstruck" by sorrow for there is no dividing, solid edge to strike and thus no suffering.

Any notions of boundaries that separate the inner body from the outer world begin to dissolve into this vast, expansive wilderness where connectivity with Nature and shared humanity is the default setting. The heart, fuelled by unimpeded love and compassion, becomes our vehicle for spiritual growth.

## The seat of the soul

Our mind cannot find our soul because it cannot be accessed by thought; instead we must use our heart, where we can trust our inner authority and truest feelings to define reality as we actually experience it.

More than a just pump, it continually communicates with the brain in four ways: neurologically, biochemically, biophysically and electromagnetically.

This is actually a heart-brain or intrinsic cardiac nervous system that is a complex network of ganglia and neurotransmitters similar to the brain.

Esoteric teachings call this the heart chakra, a multidimensional energy centre that integrates mind and body, spirit and matter and when it is open, we feel peaceful and joyful, whole and connected. The ancients described the heart chakra as a plant, like the lotus, when the heart is closed the lotus droops downwards but when it opens it is like an open flower that is turned upwards, receiving light from the sun.

## Returning to who I am

Upon finding my seat I feel the reassuring, grounding sensation as my sit-bones begin to root down into the earth, branching out unendingly in botanical fractal design.

As my awareness becomes more internalised, I direct it away from the

brain, dropping back inside the body that becomes an attentive, super sensitive vessel through which sensations and breath flow.

I notice how my body is being breathed and not by me as I witness how the breath shapes bodily sensations in nuanced minutiae, while my mind begins to fade into the background, losing its hold as the noise of the constantly chatty thought stream slips away.

Thoughts do not lose their grip easily at all, and I am thankful that persistent meditation practice helps facilitate this process.

I am attentive to the primal, animal instincts awakening, unfiltered by mind and witness how once unshackled, they transform into quite a different order of perception, more akin to intuition.

Breath carries me deeper to arrive in a feeling space beyond the senses, yet strangely like a combination of all of them operating simultaneously to perceive a shimmering connectivity.

## Like gravity in reverse

Like a plant, the "dropping down" catalyses a rebound growth like gravity in reverse, sinuously spiralling upward as awareness ascends from its earthy base, to gracefully rise up my antennae spine releasing all tension or compression in its wake.

Like a dawning, up it goes through the opening of the crown that doesn't seem to have a scalp-lid, so like a clear sky, except for the few clouds of thought that briefly obscure its emptiness.

Thoughts floating by in the thought stream become less compelling, less true and less mine; it is clear that I am not responsible for them as they come and go in the background without affecting me.

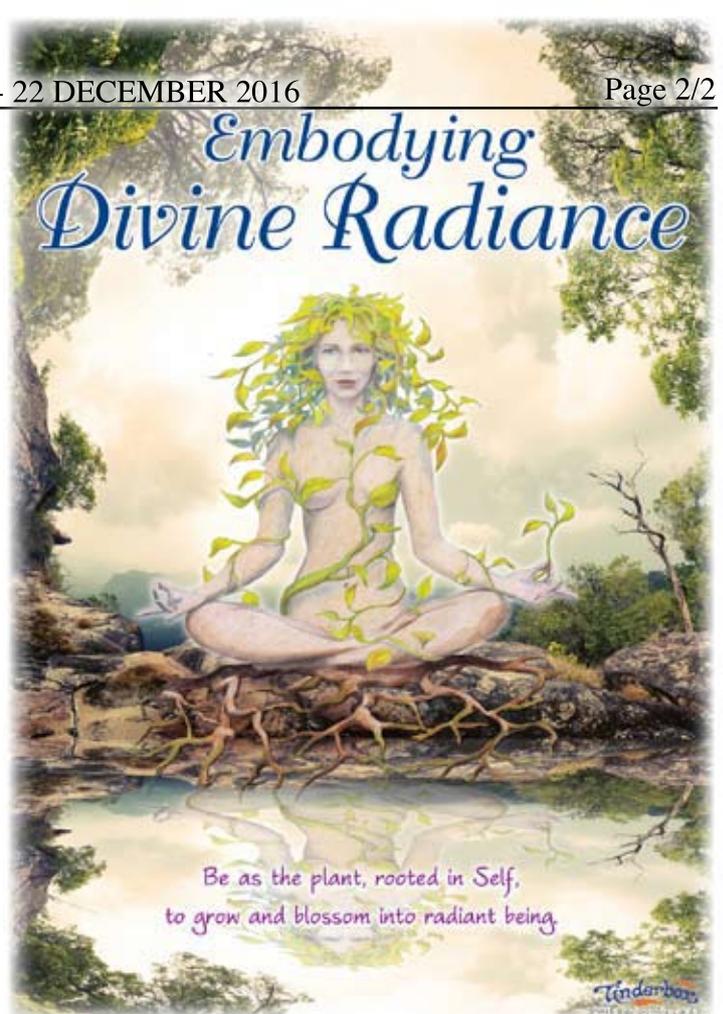
Spiritual practice encourages us to keep the window of consciousness as transparent and free from distortion as we possibly can and when we work toward keeping our window squeaky clean, we are better able to see what arises. This sounds so easy, but it is oh so challenging.

## Freedom from thoughts

If we don't try to control our thoughts then they will surely control us. In fact, enlightened beings have taught how thoughts are a product of the false self and not our real selves, nor are they uniquely anybody's, just the programming common to all humans.

Applying myself to "the work" I am rewarded by a pronounced shift from believing myself to be the thinker of thoughts, to knowing myself as the "experiencer" of thoughts and of everything else arising in the moment.

This is like pure consciousness looking out of my eyes and experiencing life. Masking our Divine nature, the continual parade of thoughts through our mind distorts our experience of life; speaking to us with assumed authority as if they are us. The mind, as complex as it is, is simply an instrument of perception, it is not who we are.



## Illusion of the false self

In the ongoing drama of mistaken identity, thoughts can warp our perception of the world so completely that our perception becomes reality.

This constant illusion gives us a false sense of self who convinces us that we are separate, limited or lacking - which is far from the essential realisation of our true nature.

People automatically assume that what they think is true, which is how the false self is perpetuated; yet thoughts must be seen through again and again in each moment, until eventually they become transparent enough to reveal what is true and real.

The great spiritual mystics teach us that we are the ground of being out of which everything we experience arises and that, which is eternal and untainted by the coming and going of thoughts and the whole world of form.

I feel a palpable sense of longing ripening in my chest; to wake up and not just know, but to embody this truth - that I am that.

*Shine like the whole universe  
is yours - Rumi*

## Spiritual beings being human

Control of the thinking mind transitions us from an identity bound to a conditioned life, to a state of being in the world joyfully but not of the world.

A steady and focussed flow of awareness into the nature of being, reveals that we are both human and Divine nature; spiritual beings anchored in the physical world yet not of it.

It is as if we walk with one foot in the material world of form and another in the formless world of spirit, like we are a bridge between the two.

## Never mind the label

It doesn't matter what religious label everyone prescribes to, there is only

one consciousness with infinitely many unique manifestations.

Each an expression of love from that which created them, whether you call that God, Goddess, the Father/Mother, Christ consciousness, Oneness, the Divine, Buddha Nature, Atman, Allah, Spirit, Source, Essence, the True Self, the Formless, the Tao or the Unmanifest.

The Divinity within us all has the potential to become a living reality, to become what lives us. When we are mindful that we have both a body and soul, we emerge from the darkness of duality into the light of our divinity.

*It is not what you have on the outside  
that glitters in light, it's what you have  
on the inside that shines in the dark -*

Anthony Liccione

## Embody divine radiance

So what is my Christmas message, other than giving our monkey mind a little holiday? I really don't know, but it is heartening to understand that it is only thoughts and the web of illusion that they weave; that stands between who I think I am and the real me.

I have discovered that sometimes it is in the darkest places of my "unknown-ness" that I find the true source of my light to help me navigate life's mysteries.

If we can consistently clear the lens of consciousness from the grime of thoughts that obscure our light, it will shine more brightly, enabling us to see where our eyes cannot reach.

The impact that we have on the world right now is a reflection of this light that can light us up like a Christmas tree, awakening us to the sacredness in every moment and all life forms.

*Be as the plant, rooted in Self, to grow  
and blossom into radiant being - Cassie*