



CHAPTER 17

THE SONGS OF OUR SOUL

The Song of the Child

B: Sean, we had a very magical time in our last segment. We talked about a lot of things, but one feeling that was evoked particularly strongly in me is that if I can sing these Songs of my Soul from my past ages—whether as a young child, a teenager, or even as an adult—that somehow there is a resonance, innocence, and incorporation waiting for me. We finished up the last segment talking about that and inviting our listeners to find that voice.

So I'd like to start this conversation with going into that a little bit deeper, so that we can really, palpably feel this and work with it. You have some very interesting and novel notions here that not only are atypical of Deity Practices, but I have no experience with them even in spiritual practice generally—these are some of the things we were talking about off-mic. So tell us more about this Song of our Soul.

S: It is better said, the Songs of our Soul. In a way, each age is a song and a Whole Expression of Being. I can look at myself as a three-year-old, as a five-year-old, as a nine-year-old, as a fourteen-year-old, as a twenty-five-year-old, or as a thirty-year-old—and I'm being arbitrary here—and I see that each one of these aspects of who I have been experientially is a song, and is

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a Whole Expression of Being, because I lived in that Expression of Being.

B: So that song is like a chapter of my life.

S: Yes, each of those songs is very much a chapter of my life. In the last talk, you mentioned your five-year-old dominating.

B: Right.

S: I said that it's not so much that your five-year-old is dominating, as you're running like hell to get away from your five-year-old. [Laughter]

B: And is the part of me that is running, my mature self or my traumatized super-structure? Who's running?

S: Good question. Who's running? The sense of you today that is trying to maintain continuity within and control of yourself.

B: The part of me that is trying to make everything okay and trying to get by in terms of what the challenges of the day are—the part of me that is just trying to be an adult, so to speak.

S: In a way, yes. We run away from these various aspects of who we have been. Many different groups do 'inner child practices', for example.

B: Right.

S: There are actually some very good things that come out of what those groups do, because they are connecting with that little boy or that little girl that was part of them. They begin to hear the song that the child can sing. The song that each one of these aspects of who we are sings, is a beautiful song. It is the Soul's Song that's sung through us at that age.

B: When I think about this, Sean, it feels like that's a song that I always wanted to have heard, but it was never listened to.

S: I think that's true of all of us. But I want to veer away from that direction, because that gets into victimization—into a bit of a pity party. Instead, we want to say, "Yes, my little guy really needed nurturance and Love, and he didn't get them." Now, that being said, in this practice, I sit down and take the child's hand in my hand. I put my left hand in my right hand, and I hold the child. I ask the child what he wants. But if you come up with a lollipop, you're getting too heady. [Laughter]

B: In other words, if I come up with the chocolate chip cookie, then I haven't quite gotten there yet.

S: No, you haven't; you're projecting. We're trying to connect with the soul's expression at this age, and the soul's expression at this age wanted to feel nurtured and loved. You can take that child and give him the nurturance and the Love that he wanted, through the Divine Presence of your Deity Yoga visualization.

B: This is why I'm so excited about this conversation, Sean. This to me is a radical new direction in this type of practice. I don't know if I've ever heard of such a thing—using a Deity to help you with the selves of your past—but it's still a very beautiful thing. I mean, I sure could've used Shiva when I was five years old, I'll tell you.

S: [Laughter] Well, it's more than that. I would direct our listeners and our readers back to the initial chapters of this series, where we began talking about the circle, and how a sense of my self arises as Shiva in the circle. I also encourage them to remember that we were talking about Divine Qualities. Essentially, the source of the image that I'm creating is Divine Radiance. It could be called the Clear Light. It is the source of all things, of all possibilities. It is God.

Going Directly to God

B: Have we told our listeners about the Clear Light? You've referred to it a few times.

S: Yes, we've talked about it. In particular, we talked about the fact that it actually isn't clear or white, but more like silver. It has a more reflective quality than either clear or white light, and it's sizzling with potential creativity.

B: When I visualize that, Sean, it has an iridescent quality to it. Is that true of the 'Clear Light'?

S: That would be a part of perception, because you see the colors of the rainbow almost manifesting.

B: Yes, the colors of the rainbow glimmering on the leading edges of the radiance.

S: In a sense, yes.

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B: Okay.

S: When we use the term God, we're saying that the source of my visualization is this quality of all-giving. Even though I have said that I arise as the Divine Shiva—the manifestation of Divine Change—that is only an aspect, or a form, of the radiance.

B: I see.

S: The manifestation of Divine Radiance is an aspect of God. I'm not saying Shiva is everything; I'm saying Shiva is a form of the Divine Change. So the source of my visualization is the Divine Change, and I go to my child with that visualization. You've said that in your practice, you've felt it coming through your fingertips.

B: Yes, I have.

S: So when you touch the child, when you put your arms around your child, when you speak to your child, the Divine Source is what's radiating from you.

B: That's just remarkable, Sean. We've been working on my Shiva practice, but I know we're going to visit a few more Deities before we finish the series. All of them are available, right?

S: Yes, certainly. Basically, you're choosing one that is an aspect that works for you. You're going direct: you're going to God. You're reaching out to the godhead and you're saying, "I'm in form, and so I'm going to experience the godhead in form, as a quality of expression." For Shiva, that quality of expression is Divine Radiance.

B: We have these various embodiments with the various Deities, so this question is very important to me. It feels as though, if Shiva is helping my child, then Shiva is actually like a set of Divine Parents—a Divine Mother and Father. Would that be true?

S: Yes, that can be very true.

B: That's where I felt it was leading.

S: Now this is important, because Shiva is change. When I first did the Tibetan Buddhist Refuge Practice, you're supposed to do a Vajra Dhara in the center of the visualization. Vajra Dhara got up and left, and Vajra Yogini appeared in his place.

B: In your initial work?

S: Yes, in my early work. And I said to the Lama, “This is what has happened.” And he said to me, “That’s good. Vajra Yogini is your Yidam, so go for it.” That is, Vajra Yogini is my special connection with God.

B: Well, wasn’t it handy to have a teacher at that time to help you with that? If that had happened to me without a teacher, I would have thought I’d failed in the practice.

S: That’s one of the big things that we’re trying to say in *The Everyday Sanyasin* and in *The Living Bardo* series: you’re not failing. Look at what’s happening and realize that you’re going to put a sense of yourself, as Divine Expression that resonates with your heart, in the center of that circle.

B: So this is more about personalizing the practice, something we’ve talked about in both series as essential for it to be a living truth, and also for it to work.

S: Yes. I can’t do it with an image that doesn’t connect with me, because it doesn’t connect! It’s not going to do anything for me. If I try to do it with Vajra Dhara because that’s what I’m supposed to do, and Vajra Dhara just doesn’t connect for me, then what am I doing? I’m just watching another television show.

B: Do you know what I’ve learned from all of these conversations, Sean? This stuff we’re talking about—with these Tibetan names and Sanskrit names and so forth—isn’t esoteric at all in this methodology. It’s actually very real-time, very practical, very down to earth, and very pragmatic.

S: It is very pragmatic. Look at that and understand that we’re bringing the sense of our Deity—the Deity that resonates with our heart—and we’re actually greeting, meeting, and connecting with this three-year-old or five-year-old child with that connection. We are letting the vibration that’s inspired in us begin to amplify the seed of that vibration in the child. When we ask the child “What do you need?” through the vibration, we fill the child with the energy of what they need. The child begins to feel the vibration and the resonance in their heart. And so the child then, as me today, sings the mantra or song of the Deity from their resonance.

B: It’s as though all the parts of me that might still be uncooked get to

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be visited, checked in with, nurtured, reflected, and mirrored. Anything that ever wanted to be spoken or said or felt by the child can finally be satisfied—that's what it sounds like. That's why I said that it feels like the Deities allow me to embody my own Divine Parents. I get to re-parent myself in a way, or feel that as in God the Mother and God the Father.

S: Very much so. We've said that Mother Kali can turn into Kalika, who is a beautiful maiden. That's the beauty of this: the resonance, through action, can actually take on the form that works the best for you.

B: And part of the practice is to make yourself available to those changes and modifications, as I did when you took me through the circle practice and the Shiva practice.

S: Very much so, because you went from the resonance of your heart. That's the clue. That's the key that we're working with here: because you created Shiva as a sense of yourself with the resonance of your heart, what you needed—which were the blue-green flames—very naturally appeared.

B: Yes. I wouldn't call it unconscious, because it did come into consciousness, but it just happened all by itself, quite effortlessly. And you and I talked in the last conversation about that. I said, "It sounds like it's effortless." And you responded, "It's abiding, but there is no efforting."

S: Yes.

The Infinite Possibilities of Divine Radiance

S: So, let's go back to this idea. Now, as I've said, a lot of groups, teachers, and therapists have been very keen on helping people connect with their inner child. One of the things about my inner child is that my five-year-old or my three-year-old is actually much more accessible than my inner thirty-year-old. [Laughter]

B: Really? You're saying that the younger parts of ourselves are more easy to get to?

S: Yes, they are. They are, because they're much more emotive and less distinct. The sense of who you were was much less manifest.

B: I see.

S: The sense of who you are was less manifest as a child. As you grew up, you began to have a greater, stronger sense of who you are. So, in your twenties and then into your thirties, you are working on a very strong sense of who you are.

B: You're talking about one's identity. It has matured, and so the sense of who I am is much stronger now. Whereas, in the beginning, I'm a little kid, I'm just learning about the world, I'm curious, and I'm more elastic.

S: Very much so. The sense of who you are is substantive as an older person, it has a lot of substance to it, it has a lot of structure in it.

B: Isn't that also true because, as you get older, you just have more experiences in your memory?

S: Well you do, but you're also acting. You're also bringing that structure to bear in action.

B: Such as: I've gotten married, I have kids, I have a mortgage, I have a career—that kind of thing?

S: All kinds of things. I have hopes, I have dreams, I have what I would like to have happen for my children, I have what I'd like to have happen with my wife. It's not just the everyday things, but it's also my dreams, my frustrations, and things like that. In fact, this is why it's hard sometimes to connect with, let's say, your thirty-year-old. Now, if you're only thirty-two, it's probably a little easier. If you're fifty years old, it's something to make that connection, because it's not that far away from you, yet it's far enough. And if that thirty-year-old aspect of you was not happy, you could have shut down. Let's say that, at thirty, I felt very bound. I felt very trapped by circumstances.

Those circumstances had competing motivations, competing values, and so the circumstances that trapped me were pulling me in different directions. Because of this, at thirty I checked out. I backed away from strong self-expression.

B: I see. This was not a time for you to write a book, paint a picture, or compose a song—or sing it.

S: Now I'm over fifty, I'm doing my Deity Yoga Practice, and I say to

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myself, “Now I’m feeling the Wholeness of Divine Blessing.”

B: Mmm.

S: “I’m feeling Divine Radiance, and I’m going to connect with my thirty-year-old.” Okay. Maybe I’m breathing, maybe I’m moving my hands around in my aura, I’m trying to feel where my thirty-year-old is—where I have a sense of my thirty-year-old. At a certain point, I’m going to find him. But it’s going to be hard to connect with him, because he shut down. Remember what I said.

B: I see. By the nature of the fact that he shut down, it’s going to make him more difficult to locate and more difficult to access.

S: Right. So I have to really open the resonance in my heart as a light, in a way, and shine that light into the cave of unconsciousness to find him. And even after I find him, he’s going to be reticent because he shut down. So what I want to do from here, is to really work. If it means, at that point, that I have to start doing the mantra for my Deity Yoga Practice, I do it. If it means singing a song—or whatever will amplify my heart resonance—that’s what I will do. Do you know what will happen? That past aspect of you will come to you because he will feel the resonance. All he really wanted was to feel the Infinite Possibilities of Divine Radiance.

B: You know, Sean, I can even remember that yearning when I was young. You see, my mom would go to shop. She would bring home the next copy of the *Golden Book Encyclopedia* when I was about seven or eight years old. And I can remember reading about the stars, and reading about Aristotle, Socrates, and other great thinkers, and there would be a little bit of radiance in what they were saying and in what they believed. I yearned to be in that environment. I can still remember that today.

S: You were experiencing a resonance within yourself, which you then began to cultivate. Now that’s cool.

B: Isn’t it interesting that I just remembered that? But more interesting, I would never give my own son or daughter—a five-year-old or a seven-year-old—credit for such deep thoughts. But I guess they have that potential, even in youth.

S: It wasn’t deep thoughts, it was deep resonance.

Resonance with Your Soul's Song

B: Deep resonance?

S: It was resonance with your Soul's Song. See, you were singing your soul's song at seven or eight years old. The problem with most of us is that we start to sing our soul's song, but the culture that we're in—and it's true of most cultures—says “No, don't sing that song. Sing this other way, instead.” We've talked about the school system before, which says, “Sit straight and face the blackboard.” Again, I've said that it's actually easier to talk with the child. I want to just point this out: it's hard to relate to ourselves as a thirty-year-old, because we know what happened. We know that five years later there was a divorce.

B: Right. In fact, when I was thirty I got divorced myself. After that, I moved from Texas to another state, and I started a whole new life.

S: Yes, there are things from our mature past that make it hard to connect with those aspects of ourselves. That's why we want to utilize the Divine Radiance that's coming through our visualization—through the Deity that's a manifestation of Divine Radiance—to begin to approach this aspect of ourselves.

What's going to happen if we don't? First of all, our Deity Yoga Practice will only go so far. If I don't work to bring into integration all the various aspects of who I am—all the different Songs of the Soul that I have been in my life—then there is always going to be a way that I have held back from fully embodying the qualities of the Deity.

B: It seems as though, if I don't do that, then my Deity Practice will not be complete. And I'll probably feel like, “Wow, this isn't working very well.” Or I'll think, “I've hit a stumbling block. It was going great for a while, but now it seems empty and shallow.”

S: That's very funny, Bill, because that's exactly what practitioners will come back to the teachers saying. “Oh, it was working so well, and then all of a sudden it stopped working.” Garchen Rimpoche would say, “Do more Tara practice.” If I were the teacher, I'd say, “Go back to the circle. Work with the circle for a while.” [Laughter] When you work with the circle, try to see

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how the Deity that rises in the circle changes. And remember that the Deity is yourself—a sense of yourself that rises in the circle. Try to see whether a different Deity rises, or if there's a different color to the Deity, or if there's some other change that resonates with you. Then work with that. The point of this is not to go back and try to do perfectly the scriptural outline of the visualization. It's a point of finding what opens your heart. And when you say, "The practice has kind of flattened out for me," basically you've said, "I've hit a point where the flow is not happening in my heart."

B: I've seen this. In some of my practices it's like constipation—it's up-tightness and a contraction. And it's very surprising when it shows up.

S: Some teachers will say, "Just continue. Just double your efforts and continue through the practice, and you'll weather through it. You'll be able to feel it again." For some people, that is a very good way to do it.

B: That is what the Sufis say: "Just keep on keeping on, just keep your repetitions going, and the problem will yield to an even deeper attunement."

S: What I'm saying is a little different. What I'm saying is, go back to the sense of Wholeness, and see if something new arises. Try to see whether your male Deity transforms into a female Deity. Try to see whether, instead of the Deity being the color of clouds just before the monsoon rains, a light blue color arises. In other words, play with it. Play with it. See what will tantalize, see what opens your heart, and begin to work with that.

B: That's the invitation. And it sounds to me, Sean, that in the case of the practice that you're outlining, we don't even have to wait until we get blocked or stopped. If we're singing these Soul Songs from our past, we can avoid blocks by continuing to open to these various aspects of ourselves.

S: It's really possible. Wouldn't that be far out? What if we didn't have to get blocked up?

B: Well, for those practitioners out there who have experienced it, it's not very fun. [Laughter] If you think being bored with your job is bad, just get deep into a spiritual practice, have huge openings, and then feel a huge contraction. It's like being kicked out of heaven. It's intense.

S: I will give the practitioner the same advice that my teachers gave me:

go back to the sense of Wholeness, go back to the circle, and begin to feel that sense of Wholeness again. Then, in that sense of Wholeness, let your heart's resonance help you to create the Deity that is a sense of who you are once more. As you do that, it will happen. It will happen anew, because that resonance will begin to happen again.

B: Right. I'm starting from the beginning, and there are new elements being introduced.

S: Yes, and you're adding new elements. And as you get cooking with it again, as it works for you, as you feel the resonance, you begin to spread the resonance. Then you're living. To get there, sure, go look at your inner child. But after you've done your inner child, then look at who you were at twenty years old. Look at who you were at thirty years old. Open yourself up, and allow your resonance to begin to open and connect with the seed of resonance in that man.

Connecting with the Feeling

S: I started on this, and then we got side-tracked a little bit; this is a very interesting question: What's going to happen if I don't do that?

B: I was just about to ask you that question, Sean. [Laughter]

S: Okay. [Laughter]

B: I'll ask you that question right now. What would happen to me if I didn't do that work? What would happen if I didn't try to find out what happened when I was thirty, and if I don't let that thirty-year-old man sing his song?

S: It's not finding out what happened that's important, but it's connecting with the feeling. It's very difficult to connect with the feeling of that man, because you're basically spending a lot of energy to avoid connecting with the feeling of that man.

B: That's a very interesting time period for me, because I was very ill at that time, physically. That's why I moved to a different climate. And so, it was a very tough time, and I was quite shut down.

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S: That is interesting, Bill. So what's going to happen if you don't connect with that aspect of yourself? First of all, your practice is going to get to a certain point, and then it's going to kind of fizzle because you've left something out. You could say, "Well, you know, I don't really need this practice. I need to just live my life and do my job and do that." So you would ignore what you've already done. You would go to church on Sunday and pray. But what happens then is, you die. [Laughter] Eventually you die, I mean. And in the after-death state—the after-death Bardo—at some point, a Wrathful Deity is going to appear to you. That Wrathful Deity is going to be holding the reins of six horses that are headed in six different directions, and that Wrathful Deity is going to hook those reins from those horses onto the limbs, head, and torso of your Bardo body. Then he's going to crack his whip, and the horses are going to take off. Your Bardo body is going to be pulled in six different directions.

B: Wow. That sounds very much like Carlos Castaneda's discussion of death, where Don Juan says death comes and smashes you again and again into a fog of crystals.

S: This is your thirty-year-old. The after-death Bardo scenario is going to take the form that's going to best manifest the feelings that you had as the thirty-year-old that you don't want to face.

B: Is it the thirty-year-old, the Wrathful Deity, or the horses that are appearing? Or is it the whole thing appearing?

S: The whole thing: the sense of you at thirty years old. You're dead now, and the sense of you at thirty who felt bound by circumstance and had no options—the sense of you who was pulled in a whole bunch of different directions, and the sense of you that you never faced—appears as a Wrathful Deity in the after-death state, who ties six horses to you to pull you apart. And that's what you were experiencing when you were thirty years old: being pulled apart by your attachment to circumstances.

B: Now you're dead, and there's no place to hide. So, there it is.

S: Now you're dead, and there's no place to hide. But isn't it a much nicer idea to get in connection with this guy now?

B: Oh, yes.

S: With the tools of your Deity Yoga Practice and your connection with Divine Radiance, you have ways to help this guy. Part of the reason that we don't want to face these aspects of ourselves, is that we don't know what to do with them.

B: Right. We don't have the wisdom and we don't have the knowledge. We're not wise about it.

S: We're overwhelmed by those aspects, so we run away from them. I'm trying to say that you can't run away from your past. If you try, it's going to come and bite you in the ass. And it's either going to do it in this life, or in the after-life.

B: In other words, you can run, but you can't hide.

S: Very much so. You can run, but eventually whatever you're running and hiding from is going to raise its head right in your face.

B: That's very interesting, Sean, because we hear all of these stories about people confronting something they've run away from in some crisis—for example, 9/11, or a deadly cancer that nearly kills someone, or a terrible, near fatal traffic accident. I often read and hear stories of folks finally facing something they've been running away from their whole life. And this is exactly what you're talking about. You're actually talking about being proactive and going in there with the Deity helping you. It's not even that hard.

S: No, it's not that hard. In fact you can use all kinds of practices to connect with these aspects of yourself. There's a kind of therapy—though its practitioners say, “Don't call it a therapy”—called Voice Dialogue. Voice Dialogue was actually developed by a Vedic practitioner. Basically, that practice sees the various selves in the psyche of the person, and finds ways to allow them to come forth. The therapist acts as a facilitator to help the adult sitting in front of him to begin to connect with these varying aspects of self, within the psyche of the adult.

B: Is that a therapy that you find useful?

S: Yes, it's a therapy that can be very useful. That's one way to go: Voice Dialogue. That's one way to utilize methods similar to those that I've been outlining.

B: Mmm.

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S: If you asked, “Which do you think is better?” I think the method I’m outlining is better. That’s why I’m outlining it! [Laughter] But there are various ways to do it. In fact, as you get into it, you may even find that you want to utilize techniques from Voice Dialogue to help you. You might even want to use techniques from Jungian therapy to help you.

You see, each one of us has to find the keys that open our own doors. What I’m doing, and what I’m outlining, is cool. It works, and it helps. When I’m more integrated, and when I can bring my thirty-year-old into doing the mantra, it’s fantastic. The ideal is to leave nothing behind—to run away from nothing. By doing that, I end up manifesting Divine Radiance in my life.

B: I’m feeling all of that very deeply right now. It’s almost as though I’m feeling the radiance from the viewpoint of different ages simultaneously. Because that period of my life when I was thirty was very, very traumatic, I’m feeling that. But I’m also feeling another time, when I left high school and eloped. I’m feeling my radiance there. I also remember the first time I fell in Love with a girl, and I’m feeling that. And that’s all happening for me at the same time, Sean, like those different voices in Voice Dialogue.

S: We could call this ‘Voice Dialogue with an attitude’, because what we’re doing is saying to each one of these, “How can I amplify your radiance, so that my voice becomes the chorus of all of you, integrated, in connection, and in communion with God?”

A Chorus of Voices

B: So there’s a chorus of voices from the past, and I’m doing my Deity Yoga Practice of the present with my dancing Shiva. That dancing Shiva has never left me, as you know. Since we started, it’s kept going. Now, with the chorus of voices, I feel the flames getting higher, taller, and more powerful. I have more ease, and I’m even more relaxed.

S: Good. My question is, now that the flames are getting higher, how do you feel about it? [Laughter]

B: I feel greater ease, so I can tolerate more change—more heat.

S: You can open up to it. Sure, sure. You can open up to greater expression. See, the heat is a manifestation of Shiva's expression. A manifestation of Divine Radiance is the transformation flame.

B: So, for it to increase in height and increase in heat simply means that I've become more fluid with the transformation? And that there's more transformation happening?

S: Yes, more of you is being transformed.

B: Well, of course. Figuratively speaking, if the logs in a fireplace are my structure, and I'm putting more of me into it, of course it will burn hotter.

S: Yes. It becomes a song that you can sing. It doesn't have to be structured. It doesn't have to be Om Namō Shivaya. It can be, "Oh, how happy I am!" Ramananda loved creative prayer. He would say, "It's very good to read somebody else's prayer or to do a mantra... a couple of times." [Laughter]

B: Yes, I remember that. You said that in *The Everyday Sanyasin*—that he wasn't a big fan of repetition practices.

S: That's right. He wanted me to sing the Song of Creation, but I can't sing the Song of Creation if I'm constantly repeating somebody else's words.

B: That's really true, Sean. There's such empowerment in that, because my song—the one that I've been singing with my Shiva practice—has been a Beatle's song: Two of Us. You know, "We're going home...." That's been my song.

S: That's such a great song.

B: I know! It's very happy and buoyant, and the flames get taller at the same time.

S: [Laughter] I congratulate you. You've really done well by finding a song that helps you amplify the qualities that you want to amplify.

B: I think this one does just that. It's upbeat, nurturing, happy, and it's about finding yourself and being at home. And it just came to me a while back, just as you said it would.

S: What we talked about in the last conversation, and what we've talked about today, is a more advanced technique. We want to have a good founda-

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tion in your visualization, in your Deity manifestation, and in your interaction with the Deity. We want to be feeling the resonance, and we want to have our song playing in our head. That's because you're going to draw on all of that as you begin to awaken to aspects of yourself that have gone to sleep.

B: Yes. Like my array of resources.

S: Exactly. All that we've talked about comes down to reaching out and connecting with the other aspects of ourselves, and using that array of resources—the resonance that's becoming a part of you—to help them find the seed of resonance within them.

B: That's another way of saying that the Divine Heritage provides us with everything we need. That's what I'm getting out of this: I have the tools, I can do this.

S: That's very true, Bill. We talked about value judgments in the last talk. Basically, what you're doing in this is connecting with an aspect of your self without any value judgment. You're not saying, "This part is right, but that part is wrong." You're not saying, "That part should have done...." You're connecting with that part of you without a value judgment, and you're singing your song with it.

B: What's interesting to me, Sean, is that when the green flame appeared, and I asked you if I could change the color of the flame, what came to mind was, "I need it to be blue-green." That was it. It wasn't a judgment about it; there was no issue of wrong or right. My thinking was, "It's what I need, and Sean says I can do it, so I'm doing it."

S: And it's serving you well.

B: Yes! I've kept it through the whole practice, and they're going on right now.

S: Let's say you had chosen the color grey, and it went badly. Let's say that it just fell flat. You would say, "Oh, well, that color didn't work." [Laughter] So you'd turn around and try another color. That's the beauty of this practice: we don't have a whole bunch of rules that say, "It has to be done this way."

B: Along those same lines, Sean, I would like to remind our readers that there are a lot of symbols of dancing Shiva. The one that I actually used to

build my whole practice was a black and white picture, where the Shiva was black, the circle was black, and the flames were black. Thank goodness I used that symbol, because then I filled in the colors myself. So, to our readers, don't go by what you see.

S: As I said to you, the reader should try to use a sketch—a pencil sketch of the image that they want to put in there—and then they get to fill the colors in.

B: Just like a coloring book.

S: Yes, like a coloring book. But we want to use the circle, because it won't work the same if you use a triangle or square—or a five pointed star or a six-pointed star.

B: Do you mean Shiva dancing in a triangle? Is that what you're saying?

S: Yes. There is imagery of, say, Vajra Yogini dancing within a six pointed star—very, very ancient imagery. But that does a wholly different thing than the circle. It's better to use a circle at the phase that we're in. So I am giving you some structure, but I'm giving you ever so little. [Laughter]

B: What you're giving me, Sean, is a container. Then I have Lego blocks, and I can build any kind of house I want. But you want to make sure that the specifications are good, so that it will serve me.

S: The specification of the Deity in the center of the circle really has to do with your heart resonance. In other words, you want something there with which you have a connection.

Expanding Your Flow of Being

B: You have used the word 'resonance' a lot, Sean. You even talked about finding your own teacher through finding that resonance. It sounds like that's the major component of the spiritual path, and in particular of the practices that we've been discussing in these series.

S: Resonance is a major component of Being. If I have a whole lot of problems, and I'm really feeling really bound up by all the problems and all the circumstances that I have to deal with, then I'm not resonating. I can't

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resonate if I feel bound up by my mortgage, my wife, my kids, the school system, the government, gas prices, . . . all of these things. If I feel that way, I could also say, “I’m not feeling the Flow of Being. In fact all I’m feeling is [growl] structure, structure, structure! Bound, bound, bound!”

B: It’s binding and it’s gnarly. It has a gnarly quality.

S: Very gnarly, yes. So what I’m saying is, at that point—and we spoke about this in *The Everyday Sanyasin*—use a little practice to take just a little bit deeper breath. Try to find a sense of expanding flow within you. As you find that, and as you open up to it, you will begin to flow more—ever so softly and gently. You will begin to resonate more. Where your shoulders were forward, and your sternum and head were down—where you couldn’t see anything because you were looking at your toes—all of a sudden your head will begin to raise up. Your sternum will come up, and you will breathe in. You will feel a sense of Flow of Being.

B: I’ve had that experience talking with you, Sean, over and over again. When you invite me to do that, everything feels like it’s going back into alignment. There’s a relationship between alignment and resonance, isn’t there?

S: Yes, there is. But what’s really happening is that you’re opening yourself up to the awareness of your Flow of Being. There is no circumstance outside of you that is more powerful than your Flow of Being. That’s what’s really far out.

B: Say that again.

S: There is no circumstance outside of you—there is no circumstance in your outside world—that is stronger or more powerful than the flow of your being. That’s because, with the Flow of your Being, possibility enters into your mind and into your action.

B: And into my life.

S: Once possibility enters into your life, you begin to play with circumstance instead of being bound by circumstance.

B: You said in *The Everyday Sanyasin* that Swami Ramananda talked about being a Co-Creator, and that he was enthusiastic about that term. Is this what we’re talking about here? That suddenly I’m a Co-Creator in my own life that I was tapped in?

S: As you become a Co-Creator with the other aspects of your self that are singing various Songs of your Soul, and as you integrate those aspects of your self into who you are today, you're becoming even more of a Co-Creator. And the real fun thing about this is that, because you're seeing the aspects of yourself much more compassionately, you actually begin seeing people around you in the world much more compassionately.

B: Yes, I've had that experience. I'll tell you something else about Co-Creating. In these conversations, we record for about an hour each time. And it's just amazing to me, Sean, how we always come to the perfect conclusion of each conversation just around the sixty minute benchmark. It's not planned. I don't use my notes, and when I look at the clock and see that sixty minutes have passed, I realize how nicely things have come together at the end of our conversation. That happens so often, it seems like another manifestation of Co-Creation to me.

S: Yes, it's really magnificent. I have general ideas of what I would like to share but, as you know, I actually have no clue as to how they're going to come through as we sit down to talk.

B: I have a set of questions for you for each conversation, because of course, this is an organized curriculum. But the questions that arise and your responses to them are pure magic. They come from Spirit, they come from Infinite Possibility. That becomes clear to me, over and over again.

S: They come from our Divine Heritage. It's so magnificent. It's not something outside of us, it is the Spirit of God radiating from the Heart of our Being.

B: I think what's so wonderful about the promise of this is that, as I deepen in my practice and others join me, I can have this same kind of experience with them as I'm having with you. Just as you said, the world becomes more compassionate, and characterizes my interactions with other people, and the world changes.

S: As we talked about yesterday, value judgment becomes discernment. And discernment is just being aware of where somebody's hand is. Discernment is just being aware of the wind blowing differently through each branch of the tree. That's discernment, and that's beautiful—it's not just

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anything. It's really magnificent.

Because I'm not placing a value on it, I'm open to experience more and more and more of it—a greater diversity. Swami Vivekananda loved the phrase, “Unity within Diversity.” It's really important to understand that all of these aspects of self that we've been talking about can end up becoming the Wrathful Deities and Peaceful Deities in our after-death state. They are really diverse aspects of ourself. What we're really working to do is integrate those diverse aspects, so that we have Unity within Diversity. We are not trying to erase them, nor to run away from them, but to help them become part of our voice so that we can sing our Soul's Song.

B: Unity within Diversity. So simple, yet so powerful.