

A Doorway Within, Wide Open



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Like to contact Jonathan, read more of his work, offer comments or suggest topics?

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About Me

Jonathan has led an outwardly ordinary life, during which a long series of inner events pointed him towards relinquishing much of that life in favor of awakening and a radical falling away of egoic self. And yet outwardly, life still looks rather ordinary. Briefly in his own words:

“I grew up in suburban
spending much of my
and assorted outdoorsy
family was kind of a

“By 17, I’d managed to
accolades and get kicked
arrested for a prank that

“I did not win any “ost
school, and it would
to imagine ‘spiritual
future.”

“I went to college
to training in my first instrument as a concert pianist; graduating with a music
degree. Pivoting immediately to entrepreneurial pursuits, I spent much of my 20’s
and 30’s self-employed.

“In retrospect, I’d say I was simply trying my best to work out how to function
effectively in the world. There were moderate successes and an ordinary amount of
failures along the way. I also had a tendency to go traveling across continents,
including a stint living in Italy.”

“Throughout all of this, an inner search for real truth ramped up, mostly unrevealed
to those around me, which eventually became quietly yet ferociously all-
consuming.

“Long periods of silence and many awakening experiences occurred during these
years, but in 2011 I left regular life entirely for a long self-directed retreat in a tiny



middle-class Seattle,
youth immersed in music
and athletic pursuits. My
mess.

earn many musical
out of high school and
went rather awry.

likely to...’ awards in
have been nearly absurd
teacher’ as a role in my

though, devoting myself

village in the remote highlands of Guatemala. There, I went through a sort of ‘final’ doorway, in which a radical falling away of egoic self became the abiding ground of being.”

What on earth does that mean?!? That’s a really good question, and one you’ll hopefully continue to ask until its answer is experienced directly by you. Perhaps what’s offered here will contribute to that eventuality. But back to the story...

“For over a year following, back in Seattle, I was hardly inclined to talk at all; mostly doing so only when absolutely necessary. And although the ordinary willingness to talk eventually returned, I still sat in a pleasant silence often, worked a little, and ultimately left again to wander quietly around Asia, Africa, and the U.S.

“Many of the driving factors in my life had softened or been dropped entirely, so the next few years were really spent adjusting to this over-arching sense of peace within, and how that informed my navigation of life. It was clear I would never return entirely to my former way of being.

“People began to occasionally seek me out, or ask me to speak or teach about my experiences. Along the way, an inner prompt revealed a subtle healing ability, often assisted by touching someone on their head. (A description of what that’s like can be found by [clicking here](#).) But most of the time, unless asked *quite* directly, my natural tendency was to reveal nothing of my own experiences or gifts.

“But that eventually shifted too. Over the past few years, the inner prompt to share what’s been received has become the prime mover of life. There’s no one here, and yet what does remain is so ordinary. When *everything* appears divine, nothing really stands out as particularly special, so – a bit ironically – the rest of the story told above seems of minimal relevance or importance at all. Life still brings joys and challenges, as always. But I am happy to be in service and bend towards joy.

“The essential function – it seems, as I walk along my own journey – is to help others remove blocks to their own awareness of their deepest being... and to live from the peace that pours forth; even though it is sometimes a bumpy road.”

Let’s go together home.

Hearing The Still Small Voice Within

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Nov 7, 2020



For many, it was so fleeting as to be easily forgotten or simply dismissed... but there was a moment where the mind was clear and inwardly you *knew*. You've certainly experienced a moment of inner guidance that led you in the best direction you could possibly have gone in. Yet the power was not in how loud it shouted. In fact it came as a gentle whisper, without fanfare. The power was in how undeniably true; how unequivocally right you knew the direction to be.

We've *all* known this experience, in some form. Yet when life is tumultuous we may wish for something louder; something to cut through the bickering turmoil in our minds when the voice within can seem so lost and obscured by the noise. Why should it be so still?!? Or small?!? ...we might plead, when we need to hear it now, more than ever?

And as we all know, Truth will set you free... not control you. That still small voice doesn't shout and demand because it doesn't seek to control you. If it *did* control you, you couldn't *be* free. If you didn't have complete freedom and volition and choice, then you would be powerless, and therefore a victim. Your only possibility would be bondage. But the inner prompt doesn't speak for bondage; it speaks for your freedom. Thus it will never demand of you... it will never seek to

take away your own power to choose, because you could not then be free. How could powerless victimized bondage have anything to do with being whole and complete and loving and unassailable and free? Truth will always set you free. Not put you in bondage.

So the inner voice will never be demanding. It does not seek to control you. It will remain a gentle whisper, born from its home in complete peace.

Yet in our storm and stress we may still wish for that gentle whisper to somehow rise above the other choices we might make and proclaim itself. But to overcome you, or overcome the other choices you might make, the still small voice would have to attack; to fight or contend with these alternatives. It would have to make war, not peace. Yet it is incapable of such arrogance, being born from peace... and peace is always stronger than war.

Why? Because peace heals. War tears apart. But peace heals. Thus the still small voice will never command forces against you. It is incapable of such arrogance, and could only, then, tap you gently on the shoulder, and whisper in your ear. It is compelling; not because of the *way* it speaks but because of what it reminds you *of*. It is compelling because of what it points you *towards*. It calls you towards peace because it is, itself, wholly and completely born of peace. One can never be led to love by force. Only by choosing it of your own freewill, because you are as free as God.

Information may arrive via any outer vehicle at all: a song, a book, a meme, a conversation overheard, a wagging tail; a look on someone's face. Digital or analog. It could come from any inner form as well: a dream, an insight, a feeling, communion with inner dimensions or beings or Spirit... It doesn't matter the form, most of which we wouldn't describe strictly as a "voice" anyway. None is better or greater or more elevated than any other. Ultimately, regardless of the form by which it arrives, there is a movement of mind. A recognition – or, a "re-cognition" – which is why it is so often described as a "knowing." One could even say *everything* – inner and outer – beckons us.

What shall we call this still small voice? This knowing? Every culture on earth, religious or secular, has had a name for it. Higher Self, Holy Spirit, Presence,

Atman, Divine Mind, Angels, Guides, or simply: Intuition. Creative Impulse or Inner Prompt will do. Whatever works. The name doesn't really matter.

And if we wish to hear this still small voice, we are best directed to our own peace. When you wonder which choice is right... look and listen carefully for the one that emanates *from* the deepest peace and calls you *towards* the deepest peace. The more we connect with our own peace, the more we tend to hear that still small voice.

So come! Just come! Come and quiet down. Come listen within. Come to this peace, that you may hear that still small voice and *know*.

Peace... Peace be with you.

Meeting Each Other, Equal To Equal

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jul 15, 2020



There is a way of “looking past” all the stories a person might be telling themselves; past their “egoic structure,” and past all their pain and suffering and contracted self-concept.

To what then? What is there? This is why music and art can be so powerful... They can embody what is there without resorting to words.

Mmmm...!

But let’s try it with words anyway; though they remain imperfect symbols. What remains without the burdens of that egoic structure, or without the stories that ossify the nearly iron-clad sense of “this is who I am”?

What is there... what do you see... when you look past the fears that accompany someone’s entrenched sense of a personal self?

It’s so free out beyond them! It’s so light!

It is all these burdens that create a sense of lack, and therefore need... But without these burdens these are absent, yah?

If, out beyond these limitations, there is no sense of need and no sense of lack, how could there be anything missing? There can't be anything missing. Thus it is completely whole; and so very peaceful. It feels like home. Time cannot degrade it... (Look! You'll see!) ...it is clearly beyond the grasp of time. So, this shining beauty is seen to be eternal.

There is certainly nothing that must be done. What could possibly need be added to what is already totally, completely whole? What could there possibly be to do... other than commune together in this wholeness?

There is no teacher, no student, in this. No adult attending to a child. There is no giving from one who has, to one who hasn't. There is no higher and lower. No one performing a ritual for the benefit of another. What could there possibly be to do... other than simply commune together in this singular wholeness?

Which must also mean that – as an indivisible part of wholeness, just like them – *the deepest truth of you is beyond all those burdens too.*

How light! How free!! How lovely! You are the same. There is no difference; no separation of any kind.

What a beautiful way to “do unto others as you'd have them do unto you!” How could it really be any different when there is no separation of any kind in the first place? The Golden Rule turns out to describe a simple fact. One's intention to *practice* the Golden Rule, then, becomes a simple movement towards returning to fundamental truth. Again and again.

So we go about our day, as if we know some special tricks, or have some special knowledge. Those to whom we can be useful will find us in due course and vice-versa... as we need them just as much as they need us for the equation to be set up for ultimate solution. And as we go, may we all wink and nod to each other, saying “Namaste, Namaste...”

The Truth of Giving & Receiving

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Apr 22, 2020



We sing the song of existence through our giving and receiving. Up and down the melody goes... It is impossible to exist in this world without all manner of things coming and going. Likewise, it is impossible we will not sometimes be giving, and sometimes receiving. How could it possibly be otherwise? There is certainly no shame in either, nor doubt that each *must* occur.

Perhaps we can agree... you cannot give anything away unless first you have it.

And in this world, it is most often understood that by giving it away, you are now without. Thus, giving is often conceived as a path to loss, to sacrifice; perhaps to suffering. The one who gives, then, is either foolish or gives such a trifle the loss hardly matters at all. Or... they do not really give, but simply opt to trade, seeking an immediate replacement of their loss, be this subtle and unspoken or overt.

It is easy to see this with material things. It is also easy to see how often we try to store up as much as possible against our loss; fearfully, jealously, desperately.

This is typically seen as true of the non-material things as well. These, too, cannot be given unless first you have them. And like before, they may be guarded jealously. They may be hoarded and kept close, in fear of running out.

And from the perspective of our separate and worldly small selves, this makes a certain sense. But there is another melody we all know, harmonized atop the first, that sings of an experience quite opposite to this...

We can easily begin to hear and see it when we offer someone else a thought; an idea... And when we do, is it somehow lessened within? Clearly no. Rather, as we share with others, not only do we keep it for ourselves, it is given life and strengthened in us. As we share it more, it grows greater still. Giving it away has actually increased our store! As it is shared and shared again it can even grow in strength and power well beyond our small selves, until the world itself is changed thereby.

If we simply exchanged a thing for something else, we haven't increased our store at all, but merely kept the status quo.

But if we have given something away, and yet find that we have more... then did we not receive?

Giving *is* receiving.

Receiving *proves* our giving. It is in receiving that you can *know* you gave.

We can still agree one cannot give what one does not have, and that it is impossible to exist at all without regular giving and receiving. But when it's seen that receiving proves our gift and giving guarantees receiving, it begins to dawn... we have not given something ephemeral, nor only recently acquired and briefly possessed. We have given from a store we cannot possibly be without. We have given not just from what we have, but from what we *are*.

How could the giving-that-is-receiving-that-is-giving-that-is-receiving possibly have an ending? Thus, it must be outside of time. And given that this universe is ruled by time, this endlessness must then be outside this universe as well. It must be of a different source.

That this seems to contradict the usual “rules” of giving and receiving on this worldly plane, simply reveals what must then be from a Source not *of* this plane, though it be regularly experienced here.

And how could you know or experience this at all unless what you *are* is of that Source as well?

Everyone here has felt bereft, at times. Exhausted and despairing. And this would be a sign of having sought to give, or receive, or make exchange from some other source. Even in seeking an “equal” exchange, erroneously believing betterment lies in its zero-sum game, we feel a subtle loss as the faint, distant notes of that other Source remind us of the overflowing, ever increasing fullness we know to be our true inheritance.

It calls and calls, forever beckoning; notes rising to a glorious symphony as we turn increasingly to it. And while we go through our day, attending to what it brings, may we keep our ear tilted inward toward its melody while we play our part in the giving and receiving and the giving and receiving until the symphony is all we hear.

Peace be wit’chu!

A Doorway Within, Wide Open

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jul 21, 2019



I stood at the end of the pier. The snow-clad Olympics glistened over Puget Sound, coruscant from end to end on this particularly warm evening in April. Rigging on hundreds of boats tinkled casually amid an occasional seagull's cry, and in the distance... as is common if you listen around dusk this time of year... was a frisky chorus of sea lions, barking.

There was no call for urgency right now. Nothing to defend, and certainly no cause for harshness. "God... this place is SO beautiful!" I thought, absorbed for a few long moments in the mountains and water and sounds and salt air.

Even as it galvanizes us, we tend to calm down in the midst of beauty, don't we?

Whether a captivating tableaux in nature, a favored work of art, or a special moment with a loved one, a beautiful experience tends to feel full and rich and complete. It opens wide the door to quietude, beckoning to the peace within us... from which a quiet joy leaps so easily! So naturally! Doesn't it?

At no point did I think:

"I should try harder to focus on this."

"Perhaps I could earn it if I struggled more."

Nope. Just stood there. Sights, sounds and smells somehow tugged on my inner dimensions automatically, pulling gratitude and contentment from the depths that stretch well beyond the surface of this body.

I've noticed a big adventure is not required for this experience either. An evocative piece of music in my earbuds or beautiful photo will nudge me towards that inner quietude and peace too; as will a tail-wagging dog.

Just talking *about* a beautiful experience doesn't carry the rich, energetic power of the direct experience. Better to be *in it*... soaking.

Sure, there may be more to our stories. Life will bring other experiences, including the difficult and painful.

But from what better place could one meet *whatever* life brings?

In the midst of a beautiful experience, it's almost hard *not* to feel loving. When really grounded in love, it's almost impossible *not* to see and accept more of what's really true.

Beauty → Love → Truth

As such, experiencing the quiet peace of beauty has deeply practical implications for our daily grind. Beauty opens wide the door to Love and Truth, and from this sanctum *we make better decisions about our lives*.

There can be a time and place for counting one's breath, or prayer or chanting or practices of any kind. But in the meantime, in richness and fullness, may these beautiful doors crack wide open, within you.

What Is Whole Is Healed

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jul 1, 2019



As the mind stills, its thoughts still, and separation stills.

In stillness, divisions fall away. As divisions fall away, oneness (wholeness) is at hand. And what is whole is healed.

Sometimes people come seeking healing. Sometimes physical healing, sometimes psycho-spiritual healing. Often, they don't really know why they've come, they just felt attracted to doing so, and end up with some sort of healing experience anyway. They often find it hard to put into words. Sometimes they come with questions, and find that the answers arrive in a sort of healing experience, rather than words.

In stillness, divisions fall away. As divisions fall away, oneness (wholeness) is at hand. And what is whole is healed.

So what the heck is going on here? In this regular, worldly dimension... how can we understand this? It depends on the frame of reference. On the... “level of perception.”

From one level of perception, the stillness of a healer seems to heal another in some way. From this perspective it seems like the healer *caused* this healing. Sometimes the seeker feels moved to thank the healer profusely, as if they did something very special for them. Sometimes they ask if it was tiring, as if great energy was spent on the effort. From this level of perception, all of this makes sense. Any experience of healing is a release of some sort, and offers the seeker a little greater freedom, which is nice. This is helpful for what it offers... ...and there is more to be seen.

In stillness, divisions fall away. As divisions fall away, oneness (wholeness) is at hand. And what is whole is healed.

At another level of perception, the stillness of a healer seems to cause stillness within the seeker, and so their healing seems to come *from their own* stillness. It seems that the stillness “over here” ignites a sort of stillness “over there.” As the seeker finds this stillness within themselves, they have a healing experience. In this, they recognize that the source of healing was within themselves (not the healer) and therefore available to them always. As such, they experience a greater level of freedom, as they are no longer limited to seeking healing from “out there” among the very limited resources available. They see that the source of healing is ever present, within. Good news, indeed! This often fills them with gratitude, which they often share with the healer. How lovely!

Often, people waver back and forth between these two levels of perception for a long time.

In stillness, divisions fall away. As divisions fall away, oneness (wholeness) is at hand. And what is whole is healed.

At another level of perception, the stillness does not seem to be emanating specifically from the healer, or from the small, egoic, individuated sense of self within the seeker. There is no sense of it originating from individuated selves at all. It just seems like an ineffable, universal stillness that precipitates healing. From here, people often feel gratitude overflowing... that they cannot specifically

direct towards anyone in particular; and is often greater than they have words to adequately express. So, they often end up thanking God. Whether they've ever done that before or not.

At the “highest” level, the stillness is ever present. Wholeness just *is*, eternally without end, and healing is unnecessary in the first place. There is no sense of individuated selves at all. No healer, no healed. Anything other than perfect wholeness is recognized as a false projection; an illusion without any innate reality at all. There is nothing to be done; no words possible; healing is absurd. There is nothing but perfect peace.

All of these perceptions are fine. You come to healing as you are... you experience healing based upon whatever level of perception you have. All of them are fine! In the end, healing is healing. Healing, and the love that underlies it is what is meaningful, regardless of the “level” of perception. Come. Come to this! Just come towards healing. Let the rest sort itself out.

The Magical Mystery Meeting Tour

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jun 28, 2019



Sometimes seekers come to a meeting with a spiritual teacher, and experience a rush of energy. “Oh!” they might say, “could you feel that? The energy here is so powerful!”

I know what they mean. I’ve felt it too.

Some seekers follow teachers, or go live with them in ashrams. “Just being around the teacher...” they might say, “this state of bliss just arises in me” (or joy, or peace, or love or...).

Besides the peace (or bliss or joy or love)... You know what’s great about experiences like these? They tend to spread. To other people; to other aspects of one’s life. Even if only for a moment. Sometimes longer. The decisions we make from this place tend to be more life-positive too. Maybe best of all, they point

one's consciousness towards greater "expansion" in general, towards the rediscovery of one's true nature. Amen! What a beautiful gift! Experiences of deep peace aren't the only trick in the book, but... how lovely! Amen for these experiences!!

Often, this is why people come to spiritual gatherings. And it's a great reason if it works for them. It's very much like someone that's been getting rained on going to find a sunny place. Life has been a bit gray? Cloudy? C'mon out! How nice that some have found this particular way to find a little sunshine.

Sometimes this is a major revelation for people as if, before, their experience was almost ALL rain, and then discover visiting a spiritual teacher or gathering can clear away the clouds for a little while. Now they seem to have a way out, at least temporarily. Amen! How wonderful they are no longer relegated to such unrelenting rain! Amen!

However... now the seeker must chase the sun. Is it here? Is it there? One cannot always go and find it, and even so, may have to chase it all across the face of the earth. What pain!

Love cannot let this suffice.

What is a sun-seeker to do? Or the teacher?

A true teacher helps the seeker discover their umbrella.

Thus, the seeker reclaims their own power to get out of the rain when they like. Perhaps, eventually, the seeker learns to build a shelter, so that even an umbrella is no longer necessary. It still rains sometimes, but it's no problem staying dry. Eventually one knows, unequivocally, they literally carry the sun with them... How could there ever be an issue of rain in the first place?

And what of the teacher? They've long since become irrelevant. Chasing the sun is absurd.

Why Do Great Pain and Great Love Wake Us Up?

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jun 28, 2019



Pain shows us the way by showing us what we are not. Love shows us the way by showing us what we ARE.

Pain demands our attention; sometimes spectacularly so. Ultimately it drives us to ask: “Isn’t there another way?” It is a simple cudgel. The only sane response being, “how can I be in less pain?!?”

Such a common motivator. Sometimes so desperate and screeching! Thus it tends to kick the search into motion. How can I feel better? Less broken?

“Broken” hurts!

“Healed” does not.

So... how can I go from broken... to unbroken? To... something more whole? To what is more Holy? And so, the pathway beginning in pain becomes pointed towards the Divine. To awakening to one's true nature. Such a powerful motivator... A very human, very ordinary path. We can all relate.

Love demands our attention too – sometimes spectacularly so – though often in a way that is so gentle it is easy for us to miss, especially when we've preoccupied ourselves with screeching pain. It can catch our attention nonetheless, simply by how spectacularly different from pain it really is.

Great love demands nothing of us. It just is. It requires nothing of us. It just is. Thus it is so very free. It naturally sees what is true, and so the searching is over. Great love contains everything meaningful and so there is no experience of lack. Thus it is full and immutably complete. It is without fear, then, making pain impossible. Attack of any kind is meaningless. Love is quiet, all powerful, and exquisitely gentle. How could these things not prove to be so spectacular as to awaken us? How could this chorus of angels not ring so beautifully that we stir from our slumber?

Love is, in every way, so spectacular and so opposite that... when it appears, we can literally have a hard time believing it, grasping it, or even opening to it as a possibility. It can seem preposterous that something so gentle could possibly be so all-powerful. When our ears and eyes and minds seem to be filled with screeching pain, it can seem only natural to lose sight of this. But just because one has lost sight of something doesn't mean it is not there. Just because one has lost sight of something does not mean it is gone, or lost or inaccessible... or diminished in its truth, power, or glory in any way at all.

An experience of great love has come? What a quiet, beautiful blessing. How naturally, then, that all other things fall quietly, gently away. There is no learning curve here, really. Love is just love. A most extraordinary facet of love being how eternal it is, thus rendering the past meaningless, the future unnecessary, and the moment of NOW stretching infinitely in every direction. This infinitude... that is so naturally found in the simple glance at a child. Make no mistake that this eternity... this infiniteness... can be and regularly is touched within the temporal confines of our daily world. Seek only this, and ye *shall* find.

How is this so? Because this is what we *ARE*. Regardless of where we seem to start, and regardless of how we seem to get there, or how long it takes, pain and brokenness heal and give way to what is whole. And what is whole is seen to be without parts... it is *whole*.

So, eventually healing and wholeness come to what seems broken *within* us. And we feel better. More whole. Ahhh!!!

Then as Love shows us a little more, this wholeness within grows... beyond these seemingly isolated, separate, “broken” places within us, to encompass *all* of what we seem to be... We feel more whole. More Holy.

And then Love show us further still: What is whole, what is ONE thing, seems to stretch *well* beyond us... beyond this body, beyond this seemingly separate mind with its seeming separate thoughts and well beyond those other bodies close to us. It stretches to *all* things. And if... *all* those seemingly separate things in the Universe are ONE, and WHOLE, then they must ALL be Love. “We” are not apart from this wholeness, and so “we” must be ALL of it. We cannot possibly be separate from this Allness... and so, we see...

We cannot look anywhere without seeing Love. We discover that Love IS everything everywhere... and so we, too, *must be nothing but Love*.

Marvelously, it is seen this has always been true, eternally. The rest was a bad dream that had no bearing whatsoever on this infinite and eternal love.

And so it is, ultimately, that Love always awakens us to Love.

Revelations and Spiritual Arrogance

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jun 28, 2019



Ever had an amazing, outrageous or awe-inducing spiritual experience? Maybe one that offered insight into spiritual truth or greater awareness of how the Divine works within these four dimensions we seem to live in? Good for you! Amen! Perhaps most who read material like this have had such experiences. Here is a quote from someone who has too:

“To me, my 30+ years of study, plus the revelation experiences... make me (temporarily) different or “special” whether anyone likes or believes it. So, I’ll come right out and say it: I see myself as a brash corporal, or perhaps even a drill sergeant, amongst mostly privates. Arrogant? Presumptuous? Egotistical? Know-It-All? Perhaps, but Jesus was a general amongst privates, too. SPECIALNESS IS

TEMPORARY, so get over it, please. I seem to know far more than I'm given credit for." – Spiritual commentator on the interwebs...

Alllllrighty then!

Revelation experiences are Divine gifts. Amen.

Who are they for? First and foremost, the recipient.

Revelation experiences are like finger prints... totally unique to the experiencer. Each of us is totally unique, and so revelation communicates in ways perfectly suited to one's unique needs. Revelations speak in the language most easily heard by their recipients. And the form they come in can be quite startling. How wonderful! Yes! What a marvelous gift of the Divine! Because of this unique and intensely personal aspect, they are often seen as "special." And they are! (For you...)

Revelations also have a universal quality to them. They occur quite naturally within consciousness whenever blocks to them have fallen away. They could not be understood at all if they didn't share attributes common to general understanding and perception. Thus, there is a commonality to them. It's as if, in broad strokes, revelation always contains the same basic content, even though that content is served in forms that make it personally understandable to the unique individual receiving it. Simply put, universal love takes many forms.

Sometimes revelation is considered a rare, precious achievement; that makes one outrageously special, different, and *uniquely* qualified. But here's the thing...

Every soul on the planet – *every one* – has either *had* a revelation experience, or is *going* to have one... which makes revelation a lot like learning to walk.

When you learned to walk, it totally changed your world! It changed your outlook, allowed you to see things you never had before, and to understand your world better. It allowed you to navigate the world more effectively, be more independent, and often allowed you to use your other talents and abilities even more than you could before. Learning to walk was an amazing life-altering shift! Wow! What a game-changer!

Learning to walk, like revelation, is also something everyone is destined for, eventually.* So, yeah... it's a real game changer for every person that experiences it but also something that is a totally natural, ordinary occurrence in human growth. Everyone is going to walk. Can you imagine how absurd it would be to act arrogant about... walking?

And what would be the reasonable way to treat those who are *not* walking yet? Who are crawling? They're probably having a pretty good time exploring their world this way... as it is, after all, the only way they know how to do it. Which is exciting after all... especially when compared with just lying there wiggling arms and legs! Omigod! Remember that?!? Crawling was an awesome revelation by comparison!!

So... these crawlers... Shall we berate them? Loudly tell them how blind and foolish they are? Point out their stupidity?

Will this help them learn to walk?

Those learning to walk... Let us celebrate their first steps! They will take them when they are ready. Not before. Let us take joy in their standing on wobbly legs... lend a gentle hand to hold onto... and console when they fall and bump their heads. Let us stand at the far end with open arms and say... "Come! Come! You can do it!! And encourage... again and again and again... as they practice their steps. In due course, *they will walk, and forget all about this. Just like you.*

*Stop nitpicking. 😊 It's just an analogy!

Super Special Secret Soul Sauce

by Jonathan Van Valin | Jun 28, 2019



There is nothing new under the sun, said a wise philosopher. Truth is older than existence. I have nothing to add. Truth is not contained in any secrets. Rather, it is spread out over all the earth, in all times, all things; in every blade of grass. A freeway. Dish soap. All of humanity.

And certainly in a smartphone. Want a guru? Answers to spiritual questions? The options are rampant, and the internet can be your friend. Need a book to read?

Truth has never been so available in the history of humanity. Just look.

I have nothing to add, really. Truth is just truth. It is One. It always has been and always will be. Many, many have attempted to put it into words. We always fail to some degree, simply because Truth is bigger than can be contained by such constraining symbols. Direct experience is the grandest communicator available to human consciousness... and so sometimes we attempt to direct people to these experiences.

But still... it's not "new." It is not original or unique. There are no secrets kept. It's the same truth; eternally available.

I have nothing to add, nothing new to say. How could there be anything new? Perhaps an evocative turn of phrase that reframes the same thing, yet again. Perhaps offering a drink to one seemingly come to the fountain for the first time. Perhaps a clever story can be told, or one can attempt to help another connect the dots of their own inner experience.

But is it "new" truth they are discovering? Is it special, or secret, or only for the initiated? Absolutely not. It is as old as forever. And available literally everywhere. It is free for the finding and taking. Always.

So is there any particular reason anyone should listen to me? Not particularly. If it seems helpful, then great. If not... also great. It is when people verify truth for themselves, within their own experience that it has the most impact anyway.

I have nothing to add. It is a delight and joy to be helpful, but I have nothing new to offer. How could anyone have anything, or offer anything, that is beyond that which is all-encompassing and eternally present? How could one offer more than love? How could one offer love and call it new and different?

Poetry of the Incarcerated

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jun 28, 2019



Perhaps it's been years and years since one has even thought of it... yet, at some point arose a curious thought about the distant past: That one had *put oneself* in the cage.

Put oneself there?!? It had always seemed like it was just the way it *was*. That one had nothing to do with it... that one had been jailed. Not the jailer.

How can one be shocked?!? Has not this pattern been seen a thousand times? That one has *always* turned out, upon careful inspection, to be one's own jailer?

I had been my own jailer.

Perhaps at the time, maybe long ago, locking oneself into a cage was a meaningful act of protection... of loving support in honor of protecting what innocence was

there, from the vagaries and violence in one's midst. This is how it usually works...

...That one locks *oneself* up. And later, somehow... one forgets they turned the key in the lock themselves and dropped it where it still remains... in their own pocket. Railing and raging, screaming in agony and anger at the injustice of the world and God, locked in a prison of their own making. Forgetting entirely one made this cage... Raging and railing, screaming in agony and anger... forgetting entirely, that release is as close as oneself.

Incarceration – at first an act of loving and necessary protection, has become a hell of thwarted wishes, aching loneliness, and the surest reason for pointing a gnarled and accusing finger at all the others, the world, and at God, screaming out in wrath and rage *for doing this to me*...

The key; long ago forgotten.

One's own hand in it, long ago forgotten.

Is it any wonder... that the world... viewed through such a lens would seem to be little more than an asylum for the damned?

What was that? Oh... “It's hard,” “I'm trapped,” and “long for intimacy rather than alienation.”

Sigh.

What's even crazier?!? Is...

...that we do not all run from the cage upon discovery of the key, screaming in joy at our release!!

Most of the time, we just continue to deny the existence of the key. We stay trapped.

But eventually, perhaps after a moment of quiet in which we've had the gentle space to catch our breath, we recognize the cage, and even recognize the key. One

sees the world beyond, and still... somehow, insanely, there is not an automatic leaping into freedom.

There is fear of stepping outside the confines of the cage. The terrible has become home... it has become familiar and strangely comfortable in its terribleness. Rage, anger and fear still pointing the accusing finger outward... strangely, comfortingly familiar.

Even if the door swings open, one cowers back into the dark corner, quite afraid of the light outside.



But finally, one grows tired of this nonsense. Grows tired of this game. Let us put down these toys and stop this round of make-believe!

Have you not sat in the hand of God a hundred thousand times? Are you not always there, in truth?

We have sought peace a hundred thousand times... not madness. How natural; how reasonable is our bafflement at how we could still be afraid of the light despite having been given so much of it. And yet, we must gently admit to having been afraid sometimes, still...

Let us take the key and push open the door. There is the open space... the light all about... It's time to go now.

Walk into the light and disappear entirely into it.

Time to go.

Peace.

Decisions & Beliefs

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jun 28, 2019



All your decisions follow from your beliefs. Beliefs define the parameters – the range of decisions – from which you can select your actions and potential outcomes. As such, they determine our experience. Change your beliefs, change your world, and your experience. Many powerful beliefs are so long held as to have gone unquestioned. We don't even remember choosing particular beliefs (yes... they are *choices!*). It is this way that they seem, often, to have become unconscious. Thus our experiences repeat the same patterns, over and over, *until we choose differently*.

Thus, it makes perfect sense not to change the world, but to change the way we see the world. We must likely first examine our beliefs (mindfulness) and discover what they *really* are, so that we can then choose between chaos or peace... we can choose once again which one we want, undoubtedly leading us to let go of beliefs that no longer serve us. We can then, only then, change our beliefs, leading inevitably to changing our world, changing our experience. Amen!!

Your Deepest Nature

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jun 28, 2019



Your deepest nature stands beyond the reach of your ego. It stands beyond the “small” self... which is the part that usually manages the affairs of your day, concerned with accomplishing this and avoiding that. This is why your deepest nature is so very quiet. The coming and going, accomplishing and avoiding have no bearing on it, and cause no ripples in it. It is so very quiet and still.

You can still come, and still go while doing all the things the world asks; it’s just that your deepest nature isn’t shaken in any way by them. This is why your deepest nature seems so incredibly solid. So strong. Unshakeable.

Because it is so unshakeable, your deepest nature cannot be threatened. Thus, it has no use for fear. Not knowing fear of any kind, it’s only natural response is gentle and open.

Gentle and Open! Or shall we call it love? Your deepest nature is love! And while this stands beyond the reach of ego, it will always and forever remain within easy reach of spirit.

Come! Come! Let us be still a moment... reach beyond our ego, and know our deepest nature.

Peace!

Enlightenment Is A Demolition Project

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jun 28, 2019



There is much talk in spiritual circles of practices, training, and the gaining of knowledge (often mystical or secret); that one must surely be better at meditating,

or doing their breathing exercises, or must understand certain concepts, or carry out rituals more often or more skillfully. Perhaps one needs to fast; do penance? ... or be more devotional.

In short, the seeker must acquire more skill, knowledge, or merit. These must be the pathways to awakening to truth.

But how could this be?

Oneness is whole. It is missing *nothing*. That is how it can be and eternally remain *one*. Anything besides oneness is not true. It is an illusion; a dream; a projection.

Thus how could it be that the seeker must gain something? Are they in fact missing something? Are they a small, separate entity, in a vast and harsh universe, required to traverse all kinds of hardships to find a magic prize?!?

Good heavens, no! How absurd! How could that come from oneness, except in illusion?

How could Love require such pain and still be Love?

How absurd.

No... you already are, absolutely, that which you seek. You must be. Otherwise, *oneness could no longer be one*; Love would require pain, and separation would have to be true.

Alrighty then... what the heck do we do? What if one isn't experiencing their own enlightenment?

It is not that you must acquire *new* knowledge, or become more skilled at practices.

It is that one must begin to *remove the blocks* to one's awareness of the Truth already present. This is the Truth that you are already enlightened. This is the Truth that everything you seek is already within you. It already *is* you. You *are* it. Your true nature is this all-encompassing Love. You *remove the blocks* to this awareness.

Enlightenment is a demolition project.

And so we circle back once again to... well... how do we do that?!?

Will it not require practices of some sort?

Perhaps, yet... these are the practices that remove. These practices must raise to consciousness all things that seem to contradict this all-encompassing Love, so they can be gently released.

These practices must allow for questioning of every belief one currently holds, so the falsehoods can be seen through and let go. One's practices must ask "what is real?" down to the deepest nadir of what is believed to be your "self," such that everything that is *not* you can be seen past. These are the practices that foster letting go. They lead to true forgiveness.

All the other practices – those that deign to add something – may make you temporarily feel better. And there's nothing wrong with feeling better. But for lasting impact, for the pain or frustration to find its true end, to find Truth, then one must remove the blocks to awareness of Love, to oneness, to the peace and wholeness already and eternally present.

Enlightenment is a demolition project.

https://youtu.be/X0wI22kv_LY



How Does Healing Happen?

by [Jonathan Van Valin](#) | Jul 7, 2018



What appears to be a healing process is like a lighthouse guiding a ship to safety. The lighthouse doesn't choose where its light falls... In fact, it doesn't do much of anything. It just shines. It doesn't really have any "will" of its own. It doesn't try to convince any ships to change, it just shines.

The lighthouse is there for the purpose of helping guide ships safely, but that is really the will of its Maker, not of the lighthouse itself. The lighthouse is, itself, merely a physical vessel through which the will of its maker can flow. It is given to shine, so it does. That's about it.

And if a ship changes course? Is it because the lighthouse did something? Not really. Did the lighthouse force the change of course? No. It had no say in the course of the ship at all, it merely shined its light, therefore illuminating the scene.

The change in the course of the ship came from the ship's captain – there was a change of mind in the captain. The lighthouse itself didn't change or adjust to the ship, nor did the lighthouse actively seek to change anyone or anything else. It merely illuminated some truth of the present circumstances.

The change agent was the mind of the captain. Nothing else. The captain saw the truth of the matter at hand, and chose differently in accordance with it. All course-correction comes from the captain. Not from the lighthouse.

Thus, does healing and peace come from the mind of the patient. Not the doctor. Thus do spiritual seekers find their way... as they see truth, and change their minds accordingly. Did the teacher do anything? Change anything? Reach inside that person, somehow, and fix something? No. Not really.

The seeker/student/patient has, perhaps by the grace of illumination, seen more of the truth of their circumstances, which encouraged them to change their mind and adjust their course. And so they did.

If you'd enjoy seeing the short video this essay inspired, it is here:



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bw8ST1mdzyk&ab_channel=JonathanVanValin