

# **Reflections About The Spiritual Path**

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*I am dedicating these pages to a dear friend  
who provided valuable advice  
to guide me in facing this challenge*

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## PRESENTATION

This short essay is devoted to the topic of the spiritual path, which is an inner journey that, as is traditionally believed, leads humans to encounter the spiritual dimension of existence.

The chapters that follow seek to offer reflections on how to intentionally select a healthy spiritual path and how to pursue it with serenity. My aim is to share something that is sensible, and possibly even useful, without making any pretense of stating absolute truths.

*Kriya Yoga* is the foundation of my personal practice, which is enhanced by insights derived from the most important mystical traditions.

During my youth, I began to keep a journal, a simple and spontaneous gesture. Today, as I read those pages, I realize how unclear the concept of a 'spiritual dimension' was to me at the time. I mistakenly believed that adhering to a religion was equivalent to experiencing the sacred directly. I had not yet understood the fundamental distinction between belonging to a religion and experiencing an internal transformation.

Over time, I developed a sense that another level of existence could exist beyond material reality. A reality that cannot be grasped with the hands or seen with the eyes, but which emerges when the mind is quiet and the heart opens.

When I talk about the term 'heart', I don't mean it in a romantic manner: what I'm talking about is the innermost part of us where we have the most genuine emotions and the most subtle intuitions.

Is this spiritual dimension simply a figment of our imagination, a dream that lacks substance? It's possible. Over time, I have come to trust it and acknowledge it as genuine.

As a boy, my first authentic contact with anything resembling spirituality was tied to the *sense of enchantment* I felt in the face of Beauty: the allure of natural landscapes, faces, colors, or scents. The intensity of those perceptions left me speechless.

At the time, I was unaware of the possibility of spiritual practices capable of intensifying these experiences, such as the techniques employed by mystics to consciously enter the inner space I instinctively sought. I was unaware of the possibility of cultivating a connection with Beauty in an intentional, meditative, and profound manner.

Over the years, the word 'beauty' has become synonymous with spirituality for me. I'm talking about an intense, almost devastating emotion that

happens suddenly, pierces my heart, and takes me to a sublime, moving dimension that sometimes causes tears to form in my eyes. This has been my personal path to the spirituality for a long time: an intuitive, emotional, and silent one.

I would sit on a hill during my rural walks to contemplate the distant landscape. My mystical practice at those times consisted of intensifying the emotions that arose from contemplation, allowing my mind to become quiet and free of thoughts.

In that state of stillness and openness, my heart's aspirations became tangible. It had become not just a dream or a fleeting sensation, but a living presence within me.

Perhaps it's important to say that my attraction to Beauty is a key to understanding my temperament and deepest nature. Throughout my childhood, anything that didn't have a spark of beauty, truth, or poetry left me feeling indifferent, if not even hostile.

As a child, the religious teachings I received, such as catechism lessons, were never convincing or moving me, as I remember. At first, I greeted everything with a quiet detachment, but then a quiet revolt began to emerge within me. I criticized the anthropomorphic depiction of God: the God who was supposed to be pure love, but at the same time appeared to tolerate the existence of evil, pain, and injustice. It was a vision that I was unable to accept. Later, I found out with relief that some of my friends had the same attitude.

Nevertheless, one of them discovered a different way. Instead of completely alienating himself from religion, he chose to get closer to a saint whose biography he read with great passion. I have a strong recollection of how he described to me what he experienced: a blow to the heart that became a cry of liberation, a kind of awakening. From then on, he too, like me, abandoned the term 'God' in favor of something vaster, more impalpable, and more intimate: the 'Divine.'

For me, my ultimate goal was to live as long as possible in the realm of Poetry, the Sublime, and Beauty. This was both my place of refuge and inner nourishment. As I grew older, I made the choice to pursue a profession that would provide me with the time and space to cultivate this profound aspect of my existence. I understood that I would need to safeguard that part of myself, just as one protects a fragile but valuable flame.

How did my desire to practice Yoga arise? I had a genuine appreciation for those who, through dedication and persistence, had dedicated themselves for years to a discipline that could sharpen their concentration and drive for

self-improvement. Their eyes glowed with a special light, and I could sense a tranquility that can only come from those who have listened deeply to themselves.

The discipline of breathing, *Pranayama*, was what caught my attention; it's one aspect of *Yoga* that seemed mysterious and fascinating, almost sacred. I began to practice observing the instructions in a manual with care and respect, without having a clear idea of what to expect.

After some weeks of practice, I became astonished by what was happening within me: the breath seemed to become a subtle bridge between my body and mind, between movement and stillness. I had a sudden certainty, a luminous intuition, in that inner space that was silent.

I realized that *Pranayama* is not just a breathing technique, but a tangible way to experience Beauty directly, which only becomes apparent when humans tune into the profound rhythm of life.

Every time I meditate, I strive to return to that initial time, both in my memory and in my heart. I make an effort to recreate the same sense of wonder, openness, and enchantment in myself.

To help me enter a meditative state, I mentally create a landscape that is truly captivating to me: blue skies above silent mountains, and if possible, a thin layer of snow on the peaks, adding a sense of light, purity, and mystery to the entire experience. To me, that image represents the concentrated call of the Divine. The beginning of my meditation practice is at that point.

## 1. BASIC CONCEPTS

### **The Limits of Thought**

At the age of seventy one day, I felt a strong, almost intrusive intuition arise within me. The force of the plant's thorn pressing between my eyebrows was relentless day and night. This idea was not just any other, but a profound understanding that slowly matured over time, which only then could I fully comprehend it. I desired to share it with those I held dear because I felt a sense of something essential and vital.

I finally comprehended that **thought is incapable of comprehending the spiritual dimension of human existence**. Thought is not able to grasp the sacred, no matter how hard we try.

It's possible to develop a concept of God—but most of the time, it's merely a mental construct, a fantasy that comes from childhood conditioning, fears, desires, personal experiences, and the cultural models that surround us. Our spiritual beliefs are often a reflection of our weaknesses instead of a genuine experience of the divine.

When the mind questions itself, “what is spiritual”, it comes across two paths. To start, you can indulge in fantasy, creating answers that are both suggestive and insubstantial. Choosing the second alternative is to acknowledge that there is no complete, exhaustive, rational answer that can fully explain what, by its very nature, is beyond thought.

Despite this, the mind has a fondness for playing with words. We read books over and over again, attend conferences, listen to masters, without realizing that these are often just **refined mental exercises**, an efficient way to avoid inner silence.

Yet, spirituality cannot be grasped by accumulating concepts. Rather, it begins when the need to explain is waning. When thought surrenders, a new, larger, and more quiet space can emerge.

Those who have learned to think clearly and experienced inner peace come to the same conclusion: staying confined to thought is not the way to reach the spiritual dimension. Even though this truth appears obvious, accepting it is a challenge.

Why? Thought is the most reliable way to identify us as human beings. Putting it aside causes us to feel naked, without direction, as if we are surrendering our only security. Even when we recognize that thought is not enough, we persist in holding onto it. But the act of letting it go marks the beginning of something new.

Recognizing the limits of thought is a challenge that must be faced by the sincere seeker. Acknowledging that we are not our mind is a fundamental step. The mind is an excellent tool for everyday life, providing us with the ability to communicate, work, solve problems, and create. However, it does not reflect our true essence. The mind is capable of imagining spiritual reality, but it cannot actually experience it.

It is common for visions, doctrines, and even scriptures to come from intuitions that have been filtered by thought, rather than pure realization. These intuitions have the ability to motivate and direct. If inspiration isn't backed up by personal practice, it won't last long. It's crucial to master the mind, which means knowing how to put it to rest when it's not needed for the specific tasks of life.

Whenever I tried to share this insight with friends, I did it with care and simplicity. All of them told me that it was obvious and clear. At one point, I had the impression that they had truly understood me.

But it took only a few days for me to realize that this wasn't true. Their words still reflected their belief that spiritual reality could be reached by reading, studying, and reflecting.

I watched them closely: although their ideas were well-constructed, their lack of experience was evident. The mental images created to provide security were projections, but the silence of the heart never validated them.

Our conversations have stopped engaging me. I avoided trying to contradict them because it would have been useless. Even if I had deconstructed all of their claims, they would still have stayed with their beliefs, just like those who don't want to wake up from a reassuring dream.

It dawned on me that it wasn't my duty to convince anyone. It's likely that my words were rejected unintentionally by them. They were not yet prepared to accept the implications of what I had expressed.

I was reminded of Einstein's example. As a young man, he came to understand that the speed of light was constant in every frame of reference, a seemingly simple fact that had revolutionary implications.

He needed some time to fully understand its implications, until he realized that time does not flow in an absolute manner, but rather depending on the observer. Who knows how many times he tried to explain this truth, and how many people said to him that they understood... without even comprehending it.

I was in a similar situation too. My intention was to convey something that

had become a reality, vivacious, and transforming for me. But my words were not sufficient.

True understanding is only possible when the mind is silent, and that silence leads to the flourishing of intuition.

### **Religion and the Spiritual Path are entirely separate realities**

It is important to clarify once and for all the difference between religion and a spiritual path.

Adhering to a religion is not the same as embracing a spiritual path. Although they may converge or support each other at times, their paths are profoundly different.

The nature of **religion** is to have a consolidated doctrinal framework and a set of norms, practices, and behaviors that believers are required to follow. This is accompanied by a theological perspective that aims to address the significant questions of existence: who we are, where we come from, and what the significance of life is.

The experience of charismatic and enlightened figures in the past is what gives every religion its foundation, but it is primarily transmitted and maintained through cultural transmission and thought, with teachings, texts, rituals, and institutions being the mainstay.

Most religions consider the experience of the sacred, which is the ecstatic or mystical state in which humans experience immediate contact with the divine, to be an exceptional event. There are instances where it is viewed with suspicion, as though it could disrupt the order of doctrine or escape the control of spiritual institutions. In a religious setting, it is not the inner transformation of the individual that matters, but rather the adherence to the values, beliefs, and practices that define the community of believers.

However, the **spiritual journey** is one that is personal and internal. It arises from an authentic desire to connect with the transcendent directly, beyond concepts and formulas.

The approach is not based on beliefs or pre-established rituals, but rather on deep self-reflection and the opening of the heart to the sacred dimension that exists within every human being.

Studying philosophies, religions, or sacred texts, participating in retreats, or listening to spiritual guides can definitely provide guidance and inspiration, but it is still a means rather than an end.

The spiritual path's core is the direct experience of silence, the transformative silence that allows the mind to quiet down and the soul to finally emerge.

Following a spiritual path involves taking a journey that is unique, unrepeatable, and often solitary, that takes one beyond thought. It is a process of progressively abandoning the need to control and explain, allowing deep emotions, subtle insights, and broader states of consciousness to emerge.

This state of alert and conscious presence is not a way to escape the world, but instead a more full way to live in it with greater intensity, truth, and compassion.

In the end, spirituality is not determined by belonging, conformity, or adherence to a belief system. Our path is aimed at freedom and authenticity, with the aim of becoming what we truly are: a living presence, a self-recognizing consciousness, beyond any definition or structure.

### **What is the origin of the urge to pursue a mystical path?**

Not all people who feel a call to the spiritual dimension choose to follow a specific path. For many, that intuition is like a fragrant scent that drifts in the air, a sweet but distant thought.

Only a select few are willing to continue with their inner calling and turn it into a truly mystical path, composed of discipline, daily practice, and gradual and constant transformation.

There are multiple approaches to start to perceive a dimension that goes beyond what appears. In certain circumstances, inner experiences may emerge unexpectedly.

When the body and mind are prepared and there is an authentic desire, an interruption in the normal flow of life can occur. The Spirit grants an opening that cannot be explained by reason: it is a form of grace that the Spirit bestows upon a heart capable of welcoming it.

Spiritual practices have been used by mystics for centuries to develop a stable and profound awareness. Practicing inner silence and conscious breathing can open the heart and mind to a more subtle reality.

The inner state with which one approaches practice is fundamental. Both superficial curiosity and forced willpower are not enough. Calmness, simplicity, and sincerity are necessary in order to truly experience the mystery of the Spirit. Being immersed in the chaos of thoughts makes this impossible.

When the connection is genuine, there is a transformation: consciousness moves from the mind to the heart. The mind loses its grip, and a sense of quiet presence develops.

A encounter with a figure perceived as holy or enlightened can sometimes lead to the desire to draw closer to the mystery. The silent power that emanates from that presence can be profound, whether it's in a film, biography, or testimony.

A feeling of attraction emerges, a nostalgia for something unknown yet intimate, as if an ancient memory resurfaces from the heart.

It is common for us to imagine sainthood as an unattainable state that requires renunciation, sacrifice, and separation from life. Our admiration for the figure is strong, but we feel distant, as if we were placed on a different plane.

At times, the attraction grows so much that it becomes a sort of sweet obsession. A mysterious connection develops between you and that person, almost as if they embody something you've always wanted without realizing it.

That sudden, silent love then becomes the first gateway to the world of the Spirit. Something profound happens: a breach occurs in your heart, and light begins to filter through it.

Those who have lived through a similar experience frequently fail to recognize it right away. They are unable to articulate what transpired, and they do not feel the necessity to divulge it.

In some cases, there's no need for words, or public testimony: sometimes all you need is a single tear, a tear of pure devotion, which can hold more truth than a thousand speeches.

An unexpected sensitivity is born instantly, as if a subtle channel opens into a deeper reality, and an unknown, clear, and objectless passion is ignited.

A truly mystical path can begin with that inner touch. It is not by imitation, ambition, or imitation, but by the soul's need.

Anyone who has glimpsed the mystery, even for a moment, feels an indescribable compulsion to return to that presence, to that silence, to that light that, once recognized, can never be forgotten.

### **Reflecting on the inner progression of each human being**

We are conscious beings who recognize themselves as an 'I': a center that thinks, feels, moves, and acts in the world, making use of every body's capacity.

Where does the desire to embark on a spiritual path originate? To comprehend it, we need to see four fundamental moments in our life

experience, four 'births' that signify the advancement of human consciousness.

#### *Birth into the physical dimension*

In the early years of our existence, we are almost entirely focused on discovering the body and the material world. We acquire the ability to move, touch, and recognize shapes, sounds, and colors. Our body is our initial tool for relating to reality and allows us to act and communicate. At this stage, consciousness is centered on the body and senses; it is still a basic awareness, but already enriched by curiosity and wonder.

#### *Birth into the emotional dimension*

At almost the same time and throughout our lives, the emotional dimension is often evident. Since childhood, we experience emotions that are immediate and visceral such as fear, attraction, anger, discomfort, and joy.

The transformation of these emotions into more complex and refined feelings, such as affection, love, compassion, and empathy, takes place over time.

When emotional life is nurtured with attention and openness, it becomes a valuable resource for sensitivity and connection with others. This is the initial step toward comprehending the profound unity that connects all living beings.

#### *Birth to the mental dimension*

The reflective mind is developed during adolescence, which means the ability to think independently, reason, and question.

However, this process is not immediate. Those who work with young people are familiar with the fact that young people's thoughts are often confused, full of opinions gathered here and there, without a personal thread.

Courage is a requirement for truly thinking. It implies confronting one's doubts, questioning received certainties, and establishing an authentic voice.

Through time and internal conflicts, we acquire the ability to express our thoughts coherently and give them clear form. In that moment, the autonomous mind develops, the intellectual awareness capable of understanding and discernment.

#### *Birth into the Spiritual Dimension*

In the end, a fourth birth can take place: one into the spiritual realm. It's crucial to comprehend that this is not the brain's work, nor is it an extension of it. It is not caused by logical thought, but by an expansion of emotions.

The sacred can be glimpsed through intense emotions, such as a moment of wonder, a silence filled with presence, or a yearning for something undefined but real. At those moments, we sense, even if only for a moment, that there is a reality that is bigger than the visible, and that is deeper than thought itself.

Intuitive flashes can turn into a stable awareness, revealing a tangible spiritual dimension through direct experience, not just belief.

Spirituality is birthed not by blind faith or doctrine but by inner knowledge, which is silent and certain, and which is revealed through experience and the maturation of the heart.

It arises from a long inner journey made of openness, listening, and transformation, rather than through mental effort. Spirituality is not something separate to attain, but rather the maturation of all previous dimensions – physical, emotional, and mental – into a consciousness that acknowledges its unity with the whole.

### **The path to spirituality is arduous, profound, and transformative**

The decision to embark on a mystical discipline or follow an authentic spiritual path is not one to be taken lightly. The journey is both long and demanding, necessitating patience, perseverance, and genuine dedication.

We need to get rid of the idea that reading books, attending conferences, or exchanging opinions with others is enough. These experiences are able to stimulate the mind, but they cannot replace the live and silent experience of practice.

The spiritual path is not a guarantee of immediate results. The path is not about conquering or achieving extraordinary experiences, it's about subtle and real transformations that happen over time.

True inner breakthroughs are found outside the noise, when awareness shifts from thought to what is beyond thought itself.

Over time, those who persevere discover that spirituality is not something that should be left out of daily life. Instead, it becomes a presence that gradually ties in to every gesture, word, and relationship.

Perceptions alter and sensitivity sharpens. In an increasingly natural, intimate, and everyday way, the Divine, whichever name you choose to use, reveals itself.

What appeared distant and inaccessible at first turns into something familiar, lively, and crucial. This doesn't imply that everything becomes effortless. The greater one progresses, the more one is urged to abandon illusions, resistance, and entrenched beliefs.

Humility is essential in acknowledging that there is a limit to thought that cannot be exceeded, and that only by crossing this threshold can one enter the silence that opens to the mystery.

Spiritual experience is only accessible to those who have the ability to listen to a profound and silent emotion that arises from the heart of being. Only those who allow themselves to be touched by this subtle vibration, inexplicable but real, can enter, even for just a moment, into contact with that sacred presence that transforms and awakens.

### **The initial action is also the final one**

The first step of the spiritual path, silencing the mind and dwelling in pure awareness, is also the last. The ultimate outcome of inner exploration is to let go of the mind that prevents us from being ourselves and there's nothing more to be added.

And when, with the passing of years, the mind weakens and loses its claim to control, what remains – if one has walked sincerely – is profound stillness, the ecstatic certainty of simply being a reflection of the Divine.

Then the final truth emerges in a luminous and silent simplicity: pure awareness, which was the start of the journey, also reveals itself to be its end goal.

## 2. INITIAL CHOICE

Choosing a spiritual discipline is not about finding “the perfect path”, but rather about identifying a path that can be consistently practiced with sincerity and yield precious fruits.

It's not about conforming to a label or group, but about engaging in a transformation process that involves the mind, heart, and awareness.

To become valid, a path must be incorporated into daily life and produce tangible changes, such as greater clarity, emotional balance, presence, and a sense of meaning.

### *Begin with what you are familiar with*

It's important to observe your starting point first. If you were raised in a religious or cultural tradition, it may be beneficial to explore its inner and contemplative aspects. Inquire into your tradition to find profound teachings that transcend rituals and external rules, by seeking out teachers or masters who embody their inner and contemplative dimension beyond the external forms.

There's no need to adhere to a particular faith: the aim is to develop awareness and self-knowledge first and foremost, and then to increase clarity, inner peace, compassion, and consciousness. Spirituality is a chance to recognize a deeper dimension of being within yourself, which is often called “divine”, “absolute”, or simply “truth”.

### *The Value of Reading and Inspiration*

To gain a sense of direction, one can easily read spiritual and philosophical texts, such as works by mystics, masters, saints, and thinkers who have examined the relationship between human beings and that which transcends them.

To understand what resonates with you, reading spiritual texts is a simple way to do it. Make sure to select authors who speak clearly about internal experience, not just abstract concepts.

The writings that are born out of authentic experiences can provide moral guidance, clarify steps on the inner journey, and inspire a deeper connection with life.

It's advantageous to choose texts that cover universal themes such as the soul, the significance of existence, love, destiny, and the origin of the universe. Even if the language is symbolic or associated with a particular tradition, the teachings remain universal and can be understood by anyone.

Reading these texts is like engaging in a conversation with a long-standing tradition of human wisdom, capable of nourishing both the mind and the heart.

*A simple meditation practice is what you can start with*

It's not necessary to start with complicated techniques. The practice of observing what takes place in the mind without intervention is both effective and accessible.

To give a practical example, sit in silence for 5-10 minutes, observe the thoughts that come up, don't follow or reject them, just focus on observation. The objective is not to eliminate the mind, but rather to detach from the flow of thoughts.

Meditating is not necessarily about thinking or concentrating more, but rather about learning to go beyond the flow of thoughts and attain a state of quiet and alert awareness.

It is a fundamental practice to observe one's thoughts without judgment or identification with them. As per Master Sri Aurobindo's teaching, thoughts are like visitors who enter and exit the mind. We have no need to follow or believe them.

As time goes on, this observation opens up a clear and quiet inner space, where awareness becomes a simple presence.

Another essential practice is to pay attention to the body, especially the breath. Watch the breath without controlling it, and take note of the physical sensations. This form of awareness is uncomplicated and accessible to everyone, and it is often a safe starting point for individuals starting their spiritual journey.

Regardless of the technique you choose to start your meditation practice, ask yourself: does this practice assist me in gaining a deeper understanding of myself? Does it improve my stability, clarity-of-mind, and openness? Does it promote a sense of connection to life? If you say yes, you're likely on the correct path.

Remember that spiritual practice has the same objective: discovering one's self and rediscovering a sense of unity with life.

*Think about guided experiences and retreats*

If you are feeling comfortable with your practice, you can consider meditation sessions, structured courses, or short silent retreats.

Even a few days away from daily distractions can provide a lot of clarity. Practicing together helps to maintain discipline and continuity.

When you temporarily distance yourself from daily distractions, you can enhance your inner listening and experience states of clarity that are hard to achieve in regular life. These contexts' discipline and continuity help to establish a stable practice that can be integrated into your daily life.

*To take a decisive step forward, make a commitment to a spiritual path that has a solid foundation*

It's better to trust disciplines that are part of established traditions. The paths provide clear and progressive methods, guidance on potential obstacles, and a context that prevents confusion or self-deception.

Real traditions warn against using powerful techniques superficially or improvising practices. Furthermore, they allow for discussions with more experienced teachers and practitioners, offering support and guidance.

A spiritual discipline that is well-structured is like a map: it doesn't guarantee success, but it can prevent you from getting lost.

Joining a community of individuals who have similar values and goals is another aspect of following a solid path. The support and exchange offered by this includes both human and spiritual support, as well as reliable criteria for distinguishing between authentic and illusory experiences.

A good guide and a reputable tradition can be a true compass in guiding you wisely on this delicate and profound path to inner growth.

I will mention six solid traditions below: the method of **listening to internal sounds** or **Nada Yoga**, the method of navigating different phases of **Nei Dan** or **inner alchemy**; the **Zen** method, the *Sufi* method, the **Kriya Yoga (Spinal Breath)** practice, and finally, **Japa** or **inner prayer** are all included in this list. Below, we provide a brief description of the foundations of each practice. A comment is always included after these descriptions.

### **I. Listening to internal sounds: the first step towards hearing Om's sound**

The technique of listening to inner sounds involves intense effort over time.

The aim is to listen to a vibration, which is commonly referred to as a buzz or a continuous sound that is perceptible in the body and mind. These sounds come together towards the sound that is revered as sacred in various spiritual traditions, particularly Hinduism, Buddhism, and yoga. This is the Om's sound believed to represent the vibratory essence from which the universe originated.

Om is more than merely a sound; it is often depicted as the amalgamation of all sounds and as a reality that transcends time. The act of meditating on 'Om' is a means to connect with the essence of the universe. This internal vibration can have a transformative effect that calms the mind and deeply engulfs you in the meditative state. This practice necessitates a lot of effort, and there are various schools that teach it, including those that are part of the Radhasoami movement.

These sounds, which are internal called astral sounds, are something we can write about, but we lack the ability to comprehend their meaning. We can determine the impact of this listening on us. Unlimited devotion towards the Divine is a result of it. By practicing this, you can rest assured that the time you devote to it will be remembered with nostalgia, sweetness, and rapture that is unparalleled. This is something I can say based on my experience.

## **II. Nei Dan (Inner Alchemy)**

Nei Dan is a Taoist spiritual practice that aims to change and improve one's internal energies, leading to spiritual awakening and spiritual immortality.

This is a profound tradition in Taoism and it is all about refining the vital energy Qi, the spirit Shen, and the vital essence Jing and achieving a state of harmony and unity with the universe at the end.

Nei Dan's origins lie in ancient Taoism and were derived from the techniques of external chemistry, known as Wai Dan, which involved the transformation of physical substances, such as metals and minerals, into elixirs of life. Inner alchemy shifted toward an introspective approach, paying close attention to the body and mind as 'laboratories' where spiritual transformation takes place. The refinement of Jing, Qi, and Shen aids in the transformation and spiritual evolution of individuals.

The vital essence (Jing) undergoes a transformation to Qi during the first phase of Inner Alchemy. The preservation of Jing is necessary for this process, and it's often done with the help of practices like sexual moderation and a balanced lifestyle. Jing can be boosted by meditation and

breathing and then transformed into Qi. Once enough Qi has been accumulated, it is further refined to cultivate the Shen (spirit). This stage requires intense work of controlled breathing, meditation and visualization. The Qi, now transformed into a more subtle energy, stimulates the Shen, leading to mental clarity and inner peace.

The end goal is to transform the Shen into an even less subtle energy that will lead to enlightenment and a connection with the Tao. At this stage, the individual transcends the physical body and mind's limitations, achieving oneness with the universe. Spiritual immortality is the term given to this state of spiritual realization.

The body in Nei Dan is viewed as an energetic system, consisting of three main energy centers called Dantian. The Lower dantian is the spot where Jing is collected and stored. Physical vitality can be found in the Middle Dantian (heart area) and it is connected to Qi. There, emotional and spiritual transformation takes place. Shen, spiritual awareness, and connection to the Divine are found in the Upper Dantian, which is the head area.

Nei Dan focuses on advanced breathing techniques, meditation, visualization, and internal energy work. A technique that involves regulating the breath and directing Qi through the body is one of the most common practices. In my view, the process of directing Qi through the body is characterized by the mysterious experience of 'embryonic breathing'.

The 'embryonic breathing' involves attaining a state of purity and tranquility where breathing becomes so slow and natural that it is similar to the embryo in the womb, which does not use the lungs to breathe, but is instead fed by vital energy. The term "subtle breathing" is used for this state, which is almost imperceptible and becomes more internal and delicate as the practice progresses. This implies a state of mental quietness deep within the mind.

The abdominal breathing is predominant, which means that the Lower Dantian is heavily involved. According to the explanation, energy is directly absorbed from the environment and the universe in this way.

Sri Aurobindo's and Mère's thoughts can be a great resource for understanding this state. Sadly, they assert that they do not have a precise map of this path. Their feelings were similar to those of pioneers who were embarking on a journey to the unknown. Mère employed poetic phrases

like 'Beyond the unknown / seas of infinite shining', implying something infinitely beautiful that lies beyond the known and even every uncertain hypothesis or hope. We should learn from their teaching that our body (the 'mind of the cells') is our best friend when we encounter obstacles we don't know how to overcome.

When we direct our awareness towards the cells of the body, we are doing the most beneficial thing that can truly help us. The feeling is that this action is a perfect means of healing.

To wrap up this speech, I feel obligated to talk about the significance of a Tibetan practice that emerged as a result of Nei Dan's evolution. Tummo is the subject of my reference. Practicing this simple technique with great wisdom can lead the human being into the realm of the spiritual dimension like an arrow.

### **III. Zen**

The spiritual practice and school of Buddhism known as Zen is based on meditation and the direct experience of reality to attain enlightenment. Derived from the Sanskrit term 'dhyāna', which means 'meditation', Zen developed in China as Chán and later spread to Japan, where it took the name 'Zen'. Today, it is one of the most recognized and influential spiritual traditions worldwide, recognized for its simplicity, emphasis on awareness, and emphasis on living a life full of present moment.

Zen practice is centered around the practice of sitting meditation (Zazen) which is well-known. Zazen aims to develop a deep awareness of the present moment by allowing thoughts to flow without attachment, rather than thinking about anything. By practicing this technique, one develops the ability to observe the mind and its fluctuations without getting caught up in thoughts or emotions.

To describe the moment of realization when one understands the essence of reality and life without the ego's interference, one can use the terms Satori or Kensho. This awakening is described as an abrupt and transformative experience that goes beyond words and concepts.

Zen practitioners believe in a life that is simple and essential, free of any unnecessary complications. A mind that is simple, clear, and focused is reflected in the outward simplicity. Art, tea ceremony, and architecture are often used to express the beauty of Zen, all with clean lines, minimalism, and harmony with nature. Zen is opposed to the dependency on written texts or intellectual teachings. Even though Zen masters offer guidance,

Zen is a practice that requires personal living and realization through meditation and direct experience. The truth is not something that can be expressed with words, but it must be lived deep within oneself.

Through my brief and intense practice of Zen, I have experienced a state of mental and emotional calm and tranquility that I have never experienced before. I get a feeling of that time by thinking about a poem by a Zen master. The composition is fairly lengthy, but I'm only able to remember a few verses.

The white clouds descend and disappear.  
Alone, mighty and high, the peak of the green mountain stands out  
and casts a hundred mountains in its shadow.  
The wind calms down, the waves disappear,  
the ocean becomes calm.  
With the evening the flowers close,  
people go home  
and the peace of the mountain becomes profound.

I begin to grasp the meaning of Zen when I take a moment to pause on the last verse. It is true that the memory of this practice suggests an incredibly profound peace to me.

#### **IV. Sufism**

The mystic and spiritual aspect of Islam known as Sufism focuses on the experience of purification of the heart, intensification of love for the Divine, and direct experience of it. The practitioners of Sufism, also known as Sufis, adopt various spiritual practices to establish a stronger connection with God (Allah) and cleanse their soul from worldly attachments. Sufi brotherhoods are a source of transmission for these techniques, each with its own unique teachings and methods.

The ultimate objective of Sufism is to attain union with God, known as 'fana', where the ego is extinguished. Sufism centers around love for God. In Sufism, every act of worship and service is an expression of love towards God. The love of Sufi masters like Rumi and Hafiz is portrayed in their mystical poems that celebrate union with the divine as an act of deep love and devotion.

Sufis strive to cleanse their hearts of the impure aspects of the ego, including pride, greed, jealousy, and arrogance. In order to get closer to God, it is necessary to have a pure heart, which is thought to be where divine light resides.

To gain a better understanding of the foundations of Sufism, try to grasp the meaning of 'heart.' A state of intoxication experienced at the physical heart is the only thing that Dhikr, a prayer that involves head movements, aims to achieve. By listening to music, poetry, or mystical chants, one can attain the same objective. The goal is to elevate the soul to higher states of spiritual awareness and union with God.

I'm not sure what else I can add except to try and recreate the intoxication felt in the heart by quoting some verses from Rumi's poem.

From the beginning of my life, I have been searching for your face,  
but today I finally saw it. Today I have seen the charm, the beauty, the  
unfathomable grace of the face that I was seeking.  
Today I have found you and all those who yesterday laughed at me and  
mocked me now complain that they did not search as I did.  
I am astonished by the magnificence of your beauty and I desire to see you  
with a hundred eyes. My heart has burned with passion and has always  
sought this beauty that I now see.  
You have given a new breath of life within me, now I have become your  
sun and also your shadow. My soul is screaming in ecstasy.  
Every fiber of my being is in love with you.  
Your splendor has lit a fire in my heart  
and has made the earth and the sky radiant for me.  
My arrow of love has reached its goal;  
now I am in the house of mercy  
and my heart is a place of adoration.

### **V. Kriya Yoga (Spinal Breath)**

Practicing the spinal breath technique involves conscious breathing and focusing on the energy that flows along the spine. The spine is regarded as the primary energy channel in the body and it is where vital energy (Prana) travels through the Chakras, the energy centers situated within it.

Taking deep and slow breaths is the starting point of the practice. After taking several breaths, they usually disappear, leaving room for a state of enormous calm. The goal of this technique is to eliminate the need for breathing, which bonds the soul to the body.

Let's calmly clarify the way this occurs. To break free from this dependence, it's necessary to concentrate on your breathing and gradually internalize it. It is necessary to perceive it as energy that rises and falls in the spine instead of air entering and exiting the lungs. Contact with the spiritual dimension occurs when you are in a state of breathlessness.

Although this state may seem impossibly, it can actually be accomplished. Performing the practice correctly and maintaining optimal conditions for both mind and body (complete mental quietness and good physical health) results in the emergence of this state.

This practice changes the breath into something else than what it is physically, which is a flow of air. This is a state of eternal tranquility that can be experienced without breathing. The experience of this event can leave one's consciousness shocked. The practitioner experiences a feeling of unfettered freedom while maintaining a calm that is almost unnatural. Freedom from everything, mainly from the problems of life and from the physical laws that, apparently, seemed impossible to escape. You find yourself in front of the spiritual dimension and experience a feeling of intimate happiness.

## **VI. Japa (mantra)**

I only considered talking about this practice at the end because it is so effortless to carry out, but it is nearly impossible to comprehend why it is beneficial.

The meaning of the term 'Japa' comes from the Sanskrit root 'jap', which is to speak softly or whisper. Chapter 11 of the book on Kriya Yoga contained a discussion about how this practice happens. Japa is a spiritual practice that involves the continuous repetition of a mantra, divine name, or one or more sacred syllables. In religious belief, Japa involves communicating one's thoughts, words, or heart to a deity, the universe, or a superior force, in order to establish a significant and personal connection with that dimension. It is considered a means of invoking the presence of the Divine. My thinking is different.

At this moment, I am attempting to explain something that is extremely challenging to comprehend. This practice is essentially designed to alleviate a particular neurological disorder that is common among humans: excessive thinking and unproductive thinking, which is detrimental to us. This fact is not grasped because a small number of individuals are aware of living an unnatural existence.

When someone tries to concentrate but cannot because of constant thoughts, they may start to vaguely understand the seriousness of the problem. The purpose of Japa is usually to heal and calm the mind. It can be used as a prerequisite for meditation or other practices such as those mentioned above. It is true that some individuals have reached

enlightenment through the practice of Japa (mantra) but generally speaking, the techniques that follow Japa are what lead to the experience of the Divine.

A spiritual vibration is produced by Japa that soothes the background noise in the mind. The spiritual path requires a wonderful calm, which is like a balm. To excel in high-level practices, one must have a mind that is both quiet and focused, capable of discerning subtle things (internal sounds, embryonic breathing that is almost non-existent, superhuman peace, and intoxication in the heart.) If you fail to calm your mind and eliminate background noise before trying to perceive what your procedure needs, you may not be able to perceive anything. The primary issue is that you have a disturbing vibration with you during your spiritual practice.

Japa is useful when one has experienced a day in a typical way, i.e. with a mind active in a disorderly manner, and one cannot immediately attain perfect calm. Restless thoughts have an uncontrollable effect on the mind in this case, causing irremediable damage. The only thing that can be done to fix this is to practice a lot of Japa and calm the mind for perhaps hours before starting the subtle techniques. We are humans. Using Japa, we can reduce the background noise of our thoughts in a certain amount of time.

### **3. DECISIONS THAT MAY CAUSE PROBLEMS OR HARM**

There are only a few people who are truly ready to embark on an authentic spiritual journey, as they consider it to be the absolute priority of their existence. Most people consider spirituality to be an abstract concept, or something that is secondary to the demands of daily life.

When we truly touch the spiritual dimension, even for a moment, it is not through the mind but rather with the heart. It's not something you can analyze, but rather something you feel deeply in the realm of emotions. If we're looking to express that experience in words, we might think of words like 'Beauty', 'Love', and 'Joy'.

These concepts aren't meant to be discussed academically, they're lived experiences that transform our inner selves. An event, encounter, or vision may have such a profound impact on us that it leaves an indelible mark. During those moments, we are capable of crying with emotion. That cry is a reflection of the awareness, albeit intuitive, of having touched a reality that goes beyond the material world and conventional thought.

It's common after similar experiences to have a desire to rediscover that same emotion, to return to that “inner place”. We attempt, either consciously or unconsciously, to recreate the circumstances that made it possible. Some people change certain parts of their daily routine, while others opt for a more drastic change, motivated by a profound conviction: “This is what I long for. What really counts is this”!

Although the spiritual dimension has not yet been fully experienced, having a genuine desire for it and placing it at the center of one's quest is already a significant step. This is a genuine movement of the heart toward something greater.

This pull is not felt equally by all. Not all individuals recognize their inner longing for something that is both invisible and profoundly real. And that's acceptable. Each person is on their own journey and in their own time. The spiritual path is not imposed: it reveals itself to those who are prepared to pay attention.

#### **The danger of embracing the illusion of Esotericism**

It's not uncommon to lose your way on the spiritual path, especially if you haven't yet developed a clear intuition about what you're truly seeking. Some individuals are drawn to the spiritual path due to the promises of hidden powers, mysterious experiences, or extraordinary enhancements to

mental or physical abilities. In these instances, the journey may evolve into an accumulation of techniques, esoteric readings, and practices that may appear spiritual but are often sterile or even misleading.

The idea of gaining greater control over their minds or reality is common among those who embark on a mystical path, whether they are fully conscious or not. This approach, even if driven by curiosity or a genuine desire for evolution, can hinder one from exploring the depths of one's inner journey. Authentic spirituality is not a means to boost one's ego or improve mental functioning. It's more about letting go, listening, and opening up to a reality greater than ourselves.

The difficulty in concentrating, which is often encountered during inner practices, is not a sign of failure, but rather a natural part of the journey. The ability to maintain focus is not a product of effort, it's rather a product of love for what one is doing, with silent joy that arises in the heart when one feels close to something true, even in light of daily distractions.

The authenticity of spiritual aspiration can lead to the occurrence of a single experience of inner beauty or profound connection that can drastically alter our perspective. It is important to focus on strengthening the connection instead of constantly seeking new sensations. By allowing yourself to be seduced by magical-esoteric practices, one can stifle that initial impulse and extinguish the delicate flame of a still-young aspiration.

Esotericism has concepts that, if misunderstood or applied mechanically, can lead to confusion instead of guidance. If one has experienced a genuine encounter with the sacred, with a more expansive and illuminating dimension of being, then it's natural to desire to stay true to that experience without wasting energy on new endeavors.

The wisest course of action is often to put aside readings, techniques, and concepts and instead be affected and transformed by the poetry of your past experiences. Allow yourself to listen to it in silence. Inhabit and nourish that seed by embracing simplicity, trust, and presence.

Not everyone feels this urge in the same way. Not all people seek the same thing or have the same level of intensity. And perhaps this is also part of the mystery of the spiritual path: it is only open to those who truly seek it, with sincerity and a pure heart.

### **Trying to follow a spiritual path that is exclusively based on science is a vain pretense**

Spiritual approaches that are scientifically proven are a source of attraction for some people. It's understandable that science, using rigorous, evidence-based methods, has gained a lot of trust in modern society. The merit of

science lies in its ability to investigate the world through observable data, repeatable experiments, and verifiable logic. However, it is crucial to understand that the spiritual journey traverses a different terrain: that of interiority, subjective experience, and meaning.

The origin of authentic spirituality lies in a profound, often silent, aspiration that originates from the heart instead of abstract reasoning. The goal is to reach a more substantial dimension of existence – what many call the Divine – through a process of inner transformation. If you try to follow this path by exclusively relying on scientific criteria, you run the risk of reducing the richness of spiritual experience to a formula that is empty.

While science is focused on measuring, spirituality goes beyond that and explores what can only be experienced. The realizations it brings, including inner peace, profound joy, and a sense of unity, cannot be duplicated or verified by external instruments. There are intimate realities that only reveal themselves through direct contact, intuition, devotion, and silence.

This doesn't imply that science and spirituality should be in conflict. Rather, science and spirituality are complementary ways of learning: science aids in understanding the external world, while spirituality guides us towards our inner world. Each is unique in its language, tools, and purpose.

To follow an authentic spiritual path, one must possess a disposition that goes beyond logic: openness, attentive listening, and sincerity of intention. It's not about denying reason, but acknowledging that some of the most profound and transformative experiences cannot be fully understood without the heart.

### **There are researchers who waste their time on what they refer to as “Personal Growth Paths”**

Many paths of *personal growth* present themselves as tools for improving one's life, such as gaining balance, greater awareness, managing emotions, refining relationships, and strengthening self-esteem. These paths seek to assist you in understanding yourself better, becoming aware of your mental and emotional patterns, and providing support in daily difficulties.

Yet, for those who have a deeper aspiration within themselves – the desire to connect with a higher reality, to what is often referred to as Spirit or the Divine – “personal growth” is not very useful. Not because it's unproductive, but because it operates in a different field. Despite its usefulness, psychological work can only affect the mind. Spirituality, on the other hand, is an invitation to go above and beyond the mind.

It's common for people to believe that the spiritual path only starts when

they have made enough “improvements” to feel worthy or ready. The belief that one must cleanse and perfect the ego before crossing the threshold of the sacred is actually one of the greatest illusions. The true path is often blocked or delayed by this subtle trap.

Spirituality does not necessitate having a “more advanced mind or ego”. Instead, it demands acknowledging the limits of the rational mind, personal ambitions, and the desire for approval. We don't need to adjust or refine our ego, we just need to shift our focus away from it. It's crucial to acknowledge that our true nature extends beyond our social role, personal narrative, or ability to sharpen our thoughts.

The spiritual path's essence is not self-work, but rather inner silence. True transformation is achieved by letting go of perfectionism, guilt, and the fear of being inadequate. Contemplation is the key to transformation, not analysis, but surrender, judgment, openness, and effort.

The mind is important, but it cannot guide us beyond it. Attempting to use the mind to overcome it is like trying to put out a fire by using another flame. We must make a radical shift: abandoning the belief that we can create spirituality from our personalities. This is not possible; it's just madness.

While psychological paths may be comforting, they are not able to lead us to the Sacred dimension. Direct experience is the only way to reveal this, in a space where there is no need to “become better”, but simply to be present, truthful, and simple. We don't want to deny who we are, we want to embrace who we are without any filters or pretensions.

In this perspective, meditation, or any practice that brings us back to the silent center of being, is the decisive step. The “great illusion” that makes us feel impure, unprepared, or incomplete slowly dissolves when we interact with silence. During this silence, we come to realize that there is no need for any addition or correction: all that is needed is for us to see clearly, love sincerely, and let go with trust.

True spirituality is not judgmental, does not set goals for perfection, and does not demand extraordinary effort. Honesty is the only requirement. It necessitates being present. To be open to what is, you need to be willing to let go of everything that is not necessary.

**People who suffer from serious mental disorders should seek specific professional treatment rather than attempting to resolve them solely through spiritual practices**

While meditation, prayer, or mystical insight may provide comfort, they are not a substitute for professional treatment when it comes to serious mental

distress.

The resolution of psychological or psychiatric issues, such as neuroses, chronic anxiety, or mood disorders, requires more than just following a spiritual path.

When people are experiencing profound distress, they may be encouraged to approach spirituality by well-intentioned friends, who may themselves have a great benefit from inner practices. They perceive these paths as sources of peace, joy, and stability and wish for others to receive the same blessings. The things that work for someone who is in equilibrium are not always helpful – and can sometimes be harmful – for someone who is experiencing inner fragility.

To truly embark on the spiritual journey, one must participate deeply and freely while also possessing an inner disposition of trust, openness, and love. Those who are afflicted with anxiety, fear, or recurring thoughts may find it difficult to connect with these states of being.

The danger is that the practice may become a source of more frustration by making the mind doubt, wonder if “it will really work”, compare itself to others, and blame itself for the lack of results. Not only does this hinder the journey, but it can also intensify feelings of failure.

In order to reveal its full beauty, the spiritual dimension must be welcomed with a ready heart, a sufficiently calm mind, and a sincere will. The goal is not to achieve perfection or exceptional inner strength, but rather to have a stable foundation from which to build. In the event that this foundation is lacking, it's important to acknowledge it honestly and seek professional assistance with the necessary tools.

This is not a failure. Instead, it is an act of self-respect. Healing – in all its forms – is a complex process, which occasionally necessitates diverse and complementary pathways, such as psychotherapy, medicine, and relational support. Finding one's own path is possible for everyone, but it's important to recognize when specific help is necessary.

Spiritual practice cannot be a bridge to something greater unless a person is capable of trusting and being open. At that juncture, the connection with the sacred dimension is not simply a hope, but a living reality that transforms the heart and illuminates the being.

### **Spiritual masters are responsible for providing guidance, presence, and discernment**

Many spiritual traditions emphasize the importance of the master (or *guru*). A teacher who is genuine, sincere, and rooted in genuine inner experience can provide invaluable support along the way. They not only impart

knowledge, but also assist disciples in recognizing their deepest truth, overcoming internal obstacles, and finding their way through confusing moments.

A good master tailors their teachings to the disciple's sensitiveness and abilities, providing not only theoretical instruction but also practical examples. Their teaching's greatest strength is found in its coherence between what they say and what they do. Their presence, in addition to their words, is often what drives a genuine desire for transformation.

In times of difficulty or fatigue, a spiritual guide can be a particularly valuable tool for supporting daily practice.

Common obstacles include a lack of energy, laziness, and distractions. The master encourages perseverance with compassion and without judgment, reminding us of the significant value of spiritual commitment. Whether it's a glance, a shared silence, or a word at the right time, finding direction can sometimes be found only with the right approach.

The teacher is responsible for ensuring that the teachings received are preserved in their original form. This is not about repeating ancient or lifeless formulas, but rather conveying the vibrant spirit of a tradition, adapting it intelligently and respectfully to the present time.

However, it's important to remember that the master is not a godlike or mythological figure. His or her role is not to create dependency, but rather to assist each individual in becoming internally free, developing discernment, strength, and spiritual autonomy. He or she is not meant to be followed blindly, but rather to direct individuals towards recognizing their own inner light.

Spiritual traditions often place great importance on the initiation rite. The beginning of a new path can be symbolized by this moment, which can have a profound emotional impact and leave a mark on the unconscious, strengthening commitment to the practice and the master.

However, it is important to make sure that the rite's emotions are not misinterpreted as a transformation that has already occurred. Initiation is not about an external gesture, but about an internal change that requires time, sincerity, and authentic practice.

The statements that are being made about the master's role, such as the idea that he or she can inherit the karma of his or her disciples, are amusing. It's important to resist accepting concepts that may lead to magical or desensitizing expectations.

To achieve spiritual growth, one must take responsibility, be truthful with oneself, and realize that no one can perform our inner work for us. Although teachers can light the path, they cannot walk it for us.

Strength, dialogue, and inspiration are all possible thanks to the support of a guide or community. But the journey's essence is always internal, and it's about what we awaken to, what we recognize as true, and what we're ready to give up.

No matter how enlightened or inspired they are, spiritual teachers are still human beings. The influence of their upbringing, culture, and religious traditions is evident in even the most prestigious teachers. It's essential not to forget this, especially when the teacher genuinely presents himself as an embodiment of excellence. Being aware of their limitations should not diminish respect, but enhance it, making it more human, closer, and authentic.

It is crucial for those on the path to develop critical and independent thinking. It's important to reflect on what a teacher says before accepting it.

Occasionally, what a disciple believes to be spiritual wisdom can turn out to be just personal opinion or, in some instances, cultural projection. Teachers are capable of expressing fanciful ideas or conditioned visions. Spiritual maturity includes understanding how to differentiate between essential teachings and their cultural or personal contexts.

This does not diminish the feelings of affection, admiration, or gratitude towards one's guide. But having a healthy relationship with them doesn't mean putting them on a pedestal. The flourishing of true teaching is achieved when there is mutual respect, but also inner freedom and personal responsibility.

For those who don't have a physical teacher, there's no need to be discouraged. Through a book, intuition, a chance encounter, or a moment of deep silence, the path can start quite simply.

Even though external guidance is valuable, it's not the only source of light. Over time, a more subtle phenomenon can emerge: an inner presence, a quiet but audible voice, commonly referred to as *the Inner Guru*. The reliability of this profound guidance, which is often overlooked, can be surprising, especially when it is nurtured through sincerity, patience, and listening.

There are risks involved in walking without a teacher who is physically present. Self-teaching can have enormous benefits if taken with discernment and openness: being able to explore different traditions without constraints, adapting practices to one's own pace of life, and cultivating a genuine spirituality that is free from external impositions.

Being self-taught does not imply that one should close themselves off. Rather, it implies staying curious and eager to learn from diverse sources,

without succumbing to the illusion of self-sufficiency. There are certain areas of spirituality that are subtle, complicated, or easily misunderstood. Engaging with more experienced people – even through their written words – can help prevent deviations or illusions.

Discrimination remains at the core of everything. The comparison of every teaching, teacher, and practice should be made with direct experience and one's own profound intuition. When something doesn't resonate, even from a trusted source, it's essential to hear the inner voice that says, “This isn't for me”. This is a demonstration of responsibility.

Spirituality is a journey that is uniquely yours. There will inevitably come a time when we find ourselves alone, at any rate for a short time. In that silence, perception sharpens, self-confidence builds, and a more genuine understanding emerges. In this inner solitude, a deeper connection with the Divine can be born.

Sadly, not all teachers meet the expectations. At times, we come across figures who don't have genuine compassion, humanity, or spiritual intelligence. While it may be a painful experience, it can also be liberating. It is then that we comprehend the importance of not being trapped in dogmatic patterns, roles, or relationships that are based on conformity.

It's common to hear that those who don't have a *Guru* follow their own ego. It is important to carefully examine this statement. The ego can be mistaken for a guide, it's true. But it's true that many individuals have achieved internal maturity through a combination of practical experience, sincere introspection, and listening to their own hearts. Through discernment and humility, we can walk without the need for “permissions” or external approval.

In the end, the importance lies in the authenticity of the purpose, the genuine desire for truth, and the willingness to allow oneself to be profoundly transformed, no matter whether the path is shared with a teacher or taken alone. There is no single path that works for everyone. But every genuine route eventually leads to the same source.

### **The risk of dependence on Cults and Spiritual Organizations**

Many individuals on their way to a deeper dimension of existence express a genuine desire to blindly trust themselves to a supposedly spiritual master or charismatic organization, ignoring their own common sense.

Regrettably, some leaders portray themselves as enlightened beings, above doubt or criticism, demanding absolute obedience, and asserting their exclusive powers or truths. This is where the spiritual path can lead to psychological and spiritual dependence.

The mind, which is meant to lead us in discernment, can sometimes act as the most cunning adversary. Driven by insecurities or profound needs, it can accept even the most irrational ideas if they promise salvation, belonging, or transformation. There is no one who is completely immune. Even those who have meditated for years or consider themselves “advanced” can mistakenly believe they have found a shortcut to enlightenment.

To maintain independence, it is crucial to maintain the ability to think independently. Spiritual maturity is not achieved by blind belief, but by cultivating an intelligent faith that never departs from clarity. Trust is important, but giving up one's inner freedom is never a good option.

Cultural organizations often employ specific tactics to gain control over their members.

Among these:

- **Social isolation**, which distances an individual from friends and family.
- **Intensive indoctrination**, discourages any form of doubt.
- **Emotional manipulation**, which uses fear, guilt, or enthusiasm to create dependency.
- **Economic exploitation**, with requests for money or material sacrifices presented as spiritual offerings.
- **Suppression of personal identity**, with demands to renounce individual beliefs, values, or dreams in the name of a higher truth.

These environments that seem spiritual can cause significant harm to the mental and emotional health of those who are in them. Depression, anxiety, a sense of emptiness, and even severe psychological breakdowns can be a consequence of constant stress, existential insecurity, and the fear of leaving the path and disappointing the group.

Additionally, some of these groups discourage the use of modern medicine or advocate for unsafe and unverified practices. There are those who promise miracles or “transfers of karma” that have no evidence to support them. False expectations are created and dependence on the leader is reinforced, making him almost divine.

Leaving a cult can be extremely challenging, not just due to external pressures, but also due to internal disorientation. A person who has entrusted their spiritual freedom to a group or a teacher for years can face an identity crisis: “Who am I now that I no longer follow this path?”

Despite this crisis, it still has the potential to be a valuable turning point, an opportunity to embark on a more authentic and personal journey.

Spirituality that is authentic doesn't rely on submission or fear. The invitation is for inner transformation through awareness, freedom, and love. True spiritual teaching is not addictive, but it assists individuals in becoming more independent, clear-headed, and in touch with their own deepest truth.

The spiritual journey can lead to a search for guidance or community due to a genuine desire to grow, share, and not feel alone. It's vital to comprehend that not all spiritual experiences are actually conducive to inner liberation. Certain structures, whether they are explicit sects or more sophisticated organizations, have the ability to restrict rather than expand awareness.

Often, these structures demand complete obedience to their leaders or doctrines. The progression of social isolation can result in the alienation of family and friends who do not share the same beliefs, and every critical voice is perceived as a threat over time. When contact with the outside world is lost, it's challenging and frequently painful to distance oneself, even when something within one begins to question things.

While these structures may make promises of inner growth or enlightenment, they usually promote conformity: the focus is on following the rules or praising the leader, while discouraged are free inquiry, critical thinking, and personal exploration. The path loses its liberating potential and turns into a path of psychological dependence.

Respecting one's individuality means keeping a safe distance from overly closed or dogmatic environments. Each individual has a distinct method of approaching the Divine, and what works for others may not be suitable for everyone. Spirituality that is authentic comes from inner freedom, not from the fear of making mistakes or the desire to please external authorities.

The deep needs of the individual practitioner can be lost when teachings are diluted and standardized, even in the most well-intentioned spiritual organizations. Feeling nourished by these realities for a certain period is acceptable, but it's important to recognize when it's time to move on on your own or with new tools that are more suited to the phase you're experiencing.

In certain circles, it is not allowed to personalize the practice. It's possible to view making changes, asking questions, or seeking new syntheses as a lack of humility or even a betrayal.

The concept of "loyalty" has become synonymous with passive obedience, and it is utilized to prevent freedom of thought. True loyalty to the spiritual path is not about giving up discernment, but rather about keeping in touch

with one's inner truth, even when it means breaking free from the security of a structure.

Sadly, those who break away from certain systems can be confronted with strong opposition. There are those who mistakenly believe that devotion to the Divine is synonymous with unconditional loyalty to a leader or their organization. But a healthy spirituality does not require blind obedience. In contrast, it activates inner strength, clarity, and the ability to love without possessing.

True devotion does not take away freedom; it provides nourishment for it. Rather than extinguish discernment, it sharpens it. You don't have to abandon yourself, but rather to rediscover yourself in a more authentic and profound way.

#### 4. FIRST CONCRETE STEPS

Since I posted my book about my experiences with *Kriya Yoga* on my website, numerous individuals have written to me to share their doubts, difficulties, and reflections. Through these interactions, I have become more aware of how each of them views the spiritual journey.

I saw in many people a genuine desire to try new things and a pragmatic approach. There have been instances where individuals have taken measures I believe to be detrimental or even dangerous, such as restricting themselves to extreme fasting or attempting to adapt to extremely cold temperatures. I believe that these actions don't have much to do with an authentic spiritual path.

To me, it would have been more appropriate for them to proceed in a more balanced manner: advancing quietly, without any trauma or internal upheavals. My understanding of the spiritual path has always been as a process that leads to inner peace, not extreme behaviors that may cause harm to the body or destabilize the mind.

Respecting individual choices and welcoming each person for who they are, with their unique characteristics and character was always a priority for me. My attitude has always been characterized by sincere empathy, often coupled with a warm smile for things that in my heart were simply “oddities”.

I have never forced anyone to do anything. Instead, I have always chosen to offer simple advice, which is what I want to share here.

##### **The first step on the spiritual path – whatever your chosen discipline**

It's often the case that people who write to me are already practicing something. Nevertheless, in many instances, they must halt, take a step back, and truly comprehend what the first genuine step on the spiritual path really is.

At times, I hesitate to explain this openly because I believe they may not always be prepared to fully comprehend it. In those situations, my preference is to gently guide them, only correcting them when it is absolutely necessary.

When it happens, I strive to provide a clear explanation of what, in my opinion, signifies the start of any authentic inner journey for everyone.

I have already talked about this in previous chapters of this little book: the initial step involves distinguishing between the mental dimension and the most profound aspect of our being, which is pure awareness.

The beginning of the spiritual journey is when we recognize that we are not our mind and discover how to actually put it to rest. It doesn't matter if it's only for a few minutes. Resting the mind involves temporarily stopping the flow of thoughts, images, and automatic associations.

Several years before I began practicing Kriya Yoga, I had become familiar with an exercise I practiced every day, which I had learned from a small book on techniques for improving memory. Every afternoon, it kept me occupied for a minimum of 30 minutes. The purpose of it was to suppress all thoughts and remain in a state of inner tranquility. I will give a description of this exercise here and highly recommend it.

Find a room that is quiet and comfortable to isolate yourself. Once you're comfortable, accept the fact that you no longer have awareness of the things that are inherent in your practical life, worries, and projects, in short, everything related to your everyday life. A sense of loss and a distant pain will come over you. Accept all of it.

Focus on the point located between your eyebrows, which is commonly called Kutastha. Don't try to "chase" thoughts; simply limit yourself to continually repeating a simple stimulus in the third eye, as if you were touching it internally. It is necessary to repeat this uncomplicated gesture repeatedly. Only be aware of the constant repetition of this gesture. You must have nothing else in your awareness.

The internal "touch" is not physical, but rather a method that requires you to focus your attention on the center of your third eye moment by moment. It is a simple and repetitive act of concentration, occurring less than once per second. It is crucial to avoid any pauses without any content.

Consistent attention limits the mind's capacity to generate thoughts. Even the slightest interruption causes the flow of thoughts to resume immediately.

It's a common occurrence however that your attention is drawn to a thought at least once. Don't be discouraged when you notice this. On the contrary, cultivate a stronger determination and resume the exercise with greater intensity and presence. In most instances, this is sufficient to keep the practice going without any further interruptions for several minutes.

When carried out correctly, the exercise typically lasts no longer than twenty-five minutes. After this time, the mind naturally returns and the body begins to move or require attention. It seems that the body is letting

you know that the period of stillness and silence has come to an end.

The effect of this experience is surprising: even a few minutes can bring you to a state of deep rest, lucidity, and willingness to resume your daily activities. Surprisingly, even when the mind is engaged in precise and constant action, it doesn't get tired; on the contrary, it seems to be fully rejuvenated.

You can thus understand that the mind can remain still even while attention to the practice remains fully awake. It's evident that this isn't aimed at creating a mental vacuum. Thus, there is no emptiness within you, but just continuous attention.

With time, you come to realize that there's something more than attention within you. Although it's there, alert, and unchanged, it's not immediately noticeable. It is the Witness, the realization that you exist, but it's not a thought, but only pure awareness.

To sum up, this practice is the most concrete step to initiate an authentic spiritual journey. The certainty of not being the mind is established: the mind must carry on with its activities throughout the day, while Awareness remains in the background, silent, watching everything that happens.

The initial step is to become aware of this awareness. The spiritual path is NOT just about thoughts, it's about Awareness!

### **The journey needs to be gradual**

After taking the initial step, we proceed on the path we've decided on, while trying not to rush.

Spiritual journeying is not about speeding up towards a destination, but rather about discovering something new every day through inner listening and patience.

It's important to remember that spiritual growth is not a linear process: it may experience ups and downs, with periods of clarity following periods of uncertainty. Approaching it gradually is necessary for this exact reason.

It takes a while for inner habits like meditation, prayer, or other contemplative practices to take root. By “taking small steps”, the practice becomes more stable and deeper, which allows you to fully appreciate each stage of the journey. By taking a gradual approach, we can avoid unnecessary pressure and cultivate balance and serenity along the way.

What are the real meanings of “taking small steps”? It implies selecting one instruction out of the many you may receive. If there are multiple phases or techniques in the proposed path, select one that is easy and convenient to practice daily for a brief period of time.

The objective is to observe, patiently and calmly, whether this single act yields a discernible change over time. It's possible to observe the effects within a period of one or two weeks, or even a month.

Here's an example. Consider the practice of *Zazen*. How many individuals recognize the importance of focusing, even for months, on a single factor: proper posture? Sitting on a special cushion, with your back straight but relaxed and your hands clasped in *Dhyana Mudra*, is the basic way to practice *Zazen*. How many people comprehend the profound progress that can be made solely by perfecting this detail?

The term “progress” refers to small, subtle, and real internal signals, not extraordinary events or sudden transformations. Our perception of reality can change: the colors of nature become more vivid, the people around us become more calm, and everyday things like a smile, hug, or meeting have a new significance.

We discover that we are more appreciative and sensitive to the beauty of relationships and family ties. This is a sign that the practice is yielding results.

It's only when a change is clearly manifested that we can add a new element to our practice. Even then, we may have doubts or fears that we won't succeed. But it's necessary to take a further step forward. It's clear that it's vital not to introduce anything new until there is a second beneficial effect, just like there was with the first.

Once this criterion is comprehended and accepted, the journey becomes more fluid and tranquil. The risk of discouragement is reduced while avoiding unnecessary tensions. By taking it one step at a time and respecting our own pace, we are able to naturally adjust to internal changes like mood swings, moments of uncertainty, and unanticipated challenges, which become an integral part of the journey.

### **Each step has two aspects**

On the spiritual journey, every step, no matter how small, has two essential components: the careful practice of the chosen step and the way it should be completed.

Imagine, for instance, a teaching being delivered gradually, one detail at a time. After describing how to approach a session, whether it's simple or complex, there is usually a final recommendation on how to conclude it.

These instructions at the end are not real teachings, but subtle attentions that can make a significant difference. One of the most popular suggestions

is: “It's best to stay seated for a few minutes after practice before getting up”. This straightforward gesture permits the practice to occur internally, calmly, without any interference.

However, there is something we can do instead of passively waiting. We can experience that final moment consciously by continuing the practice in a simpler and more natural way. For example, if during meditation we listen to internal sounds with our ears closed, we can conclude the session by continuing to listen without closing our ears, thus relaxing our arms.

By doing this, the experience can be preserved without resorting to the actual technique, allowing it to dissolve gently.

During these last minutes, the suggestion is to remain in a quiet state of mind, free from thoughts and analysis. This simple moment can profoundly enrich the entire practice, completing it naturally and harmoniously.

### **The natural progression of practice**

It's essential to remember that not everyone practices in the same manner all the time. The journals of spiritual seekers are often punctuated with moments of enthusiasm, brilliant insights, and experiences that seem to reveal a 'miracle formula'. Alongside these, there are also periods of uncertainty, disappointment, or apparent stagnation.

This is completely normal. It is part of the process itself. In spirituality, the path is not a straight line, but rather a series of attempts, adjustments, and explorations.

Everyone experiences according to their own possibilities, the time available, their physical and emotional condition, and their inner sensitivity.

As the days pass, it can be very beneficial to revisit your spiritual journal to consider how the practice has affected your state of mind and inner balance.

It's typical for an authentic practice to give off a feeling of well-being and lightness, even if it's mild. If you feel tension, heaviness, or constant discomfort, it's best to suspend or revise the technique used.

When you're in a reflective mood, it can be helpful to mentally repeat an inspiring phrase, perhaps from a spiritual text that has profoundly affected you. When felt with genuine emotion, those words become an internal anchor and silent guide that accompany your journey.

## **Improving the joy of the journey**

The age we live in is a time when we are easily drawn into automaticity and frenzy. An authentic spiritual path encourages us to escape from this collective hypnosis and rediscover the joy of simply living: feeling our hearts open, acknowledging the beauty in small details, appreciating the living presence of each moment.

Occasionally, this feeling manifests physically, as a mild pressure or a subtle vibration in the heart area. It's like an inner glow that quietly follows us.

If we start to feel that our path is leading us toward emptiness, a sterile or beauty-less sensation, it's important to pause and think. If our spiritual path doesn't nourish us internally and make us feel more alive and present, it can quickly fade away. It's beneficial to keep a journal that contains notes about moments when we felt truly good, in harmony with ourselves and with life.

Let's remember that the spiritual path shouldn't distance us from the world, but rather teach us to experience it better.

## **Completing something that appears incomplete**

During your journey, you may come across teachings that look vague or incomplete. You may feel that there is a need for additional explanation or more precise guidance. It's crucial to comprehend that true spiritual instruction is never entirely “complete”.

Authentic teaching always leaves a space of mystery, allowing for experimentation and discovery by the individual. In that space, the most valuable opportunity arises: to learn how to complete what is missing from inside.

Instead of immediately seeking explanations from an external source, experiment with conscious imagination. Visualize the part that seems incomplete in a calm and open manner and let a possible answer come to you without thinking about it.

Provide a clear, simple, and coherent answer to this question. With a sense of confidence, put it into practice by following your heart and intuition.

The pleasure that comes from this can be unexpected at times. During these moments, your imagination transcends fantasy and becomes a link between the inner world and spiritual reality.

You come across more subtle levels of being when you go beyond logical thought. As time goes by, you will realize that what you sensed was not a

deception, but rather a genuine encounter with the spiritual realm.

### **Utilize visualization's power to work**

Learn how to broaden your understanding through visualizing.

Let's take an example. If you've been informed that an inner light will come out during a specific practice, think of that light filling your body.

Like a spiritual seed, this visualization will sprout, grow, and manifest as a real and tangible experience.

The same applies to the perception of energy flowing through the body or the activation of energy centers (*Chakras*). Imagine these phenomena as if they were already happening in the present moment.

This is not merely a self-suggestion exercise, but rather a conscious participation in spiritual reality. According to many mystical traditions, what can be visualized with depth, intensity, and clarity has the power to manifest.

While a teaching may seem incomplete at first, it's often meant to be an invitation to refine your intuition. You are the one who must complete it, not randomly, but with the inner wisdom that arises only when the mind is calm and the heart is receptive.

### **Intuition, Imagination, and spiritual truth**

Conscious visualization and intuition are closely connected. While meditating, subtle messages can emerge inside you in the form of internal images, symbols, or sensations. This understanding is not based on logical reasoning but rather on a deeper intelligence.

Imagining one's union with the universe or dissolution into infinity can act as a genuine preparation for authentic and transformative spiritual experiences.

My belief is that receiving spiritual teaching is best done this way: not as a set of concepts to remember, but as a living process that involves the mind, heart, and soul.

Teachings that are excessively analytical and created solely by rational thinking can often appear sterile and lifeless. Instead of listening to what you think is true, listen to what quietly awakens your inner self.

A spiritual path doesn't result in the accumulation of beliefs, but rather in the direct discovery of reality. Sometimes, completing what is left incomplete with intuition is precisely what makes it possible to move closer to the truth.

## **The right attitude to have on the spiritual path**

Years of practice and reflection can be necessary to understand the most appropriate inner attitude. In any case, I will attempt to condense what I feel is crucial.

### *The yearning for contact with the divine*

Those who choose to follow a spiritual path are almost always driven by a profound desire to encounter, understand, or be united with the Divine. It's a genuine and natural impulse. Yet paradoxically, this same desire must be let go. We should expect nothing.

Even the most subtle expectations can generate an inner tension that is imperceptible, but it can distance us from the state of no-mind, the only true gateway to spiritual reality.

The only state to “pursue”, if we wish to use that word, is total silence: emptiness, pure presence.

It's possible to question: why do great saints and masters frequently express a burning, almost desperate, desire for God or enlightenment?

It's true. In their lives, we find extreme gestures, fiery words, and expressions of an intensity that can even seem insane.

Upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that this desire was not produced by the mind. The outcome was not a result of expectations or calculations, but rather an inner fire that purifies, not disturbs. It did not cause anxiety, but total concentration. It wasn't an effort, it was a surrender.

This provides us with a subtle principle: if our spiritual desire causes agitation, confusion, or impatience, it has not yet been purified.

We must learn to refine it internally, distill it until it becomes a flame that illuminates without burning. Only then can we offer it to the Divine and let it go.

### *Devotion: spontaneous, not forced*

Ultimately, there is a delicate question that arises: is cultivating a devotional attitude essential for spiritual practice? My answer is no, if that means forcing an emotion or constructing an artificial intention.

Genuine devotion cannot be made; it arises spontaneously when we enter a new, mysterious territory where we cannot predict what we will find.

What else could we encounter besides the gentle breeze of the Divine, which envelops us in perfect peace? When this occurs, the heart opens on its own. A silent joy takes root within us as gratitude blossoms naturally. Any force, however, poses a risk of obscuring the pureness of the

experience.

In conclusion, the right attitude towards spiritual growth is not determined by rigid rules, but rather by availability, simplicity, and openness. It is a constant invitation to give up on thoughts, expectations, images, and desires. In this silence and trusting surrender, contact with the Divine arises.

## **5. THE INITIAL RESULTS OF YOUR EFFORTS ARE EMERGING**

The spiritual journey can manifest itself in a variety of ways. At times, it can look like a sudden shift into a state of inner stillness and contemplation, where consciousness appears to access a dimension that is never before encountered.

During these moments, there is a profound and almost ineffable joy that appears to come from the innermost core of one's being. Rational thought fades away, leaving behind an inner silence that is filled with meaning. The mind is no longer occupied by worries or concepts: it is now a conscious existence, surrounded by a sense of wholeness.

People who go through this kind of experience often describe a genuine connection with something larger than themselves: a reality that is called the Divine, the deep Self, Life, or simply the Mystery. At that moment, the suffering associated with limiting ideas or beliefs can disappear, and a state of consciousness that approaches pure joy beyond words can be achieved.

Spiritual awakening often involves an internal transformation for many. It leads to a new understanding of yourself, others, and the world. Priorities have shifted: more attention is given to qualities such as love, compassion, listening, and searching for meaning that transcends material goals.

For some individuals, this awakening leads to a profound connection with nature, which they see as a living expression of the sacred or a manifestation of universal harmony. Although each experience is individual, many share a sense of openness, unity, and wonder.

### **Experiencing intense love for the Divine**

In numerous spiritual traditions worldwide, people describe experiencing profound and all-encompassing love for what is perceived as the Divine, Transcendental, or the Ultimate Reality. Such experiences are frequently perceived as moments of intense inner union, where the sense of separation vanishes, and consciousness comes into direct contact with an infinite, silent, and utterly alive presence.

The state of pure and unconditional love that transcends the limits of the ordinary mind can manifest through this union. Love does not possess a specific object in this state: it is consumed by itself, like a flame burning in the heart and seeking only its own intensity.

The state has been described in different words by different traditions. In India, *Samadhi*, a state of profound absorption, is the term for *Fana*, which is the ego's dissolution into God by *Sufi* mystics. In both cases, it appears that personal identity dissolves into a broader consciousness, in which all boundaries between "self" and "divine" dissolve. This state is sometimes referred to as ecstasy, where time stands still, space becomes transparent, and the being is filled with a living and vibrant peace.

These experiences often have physical manifestations, including shivers, tears of joy, and a sense of lightness or expansion. There are many mystic tales, both Eastern and Western, that contain them. Saint Teresa of Avila, for instance, mentioned an angel who pierced her heart with a fiery dart, a metaphorical depiction of a divine love so intense that it resulted in both pain and bliss. Saint Francis of Assisi, while contemplating, entered states where the body seemed to forget its own weight.

Through meditative dance, *Sufi* dervishes can achieve a state where the body moves as if it is propelled by a superior force. In verse, Rumi described this condition as a spiritual drunkenness that involves the soul intoxicated with love for the Divine.

Buddhism describes similar experiences in terms of profound awareness: love for a particular entity isn't the way, but rather access to states of clear consciousness, where the sense of self dissolves into an interdependent and non-dual reality.

Regardless of the tradition, these experiences can transform the interiority in a radically new way. Spiritual love is more than just an overwhelming emotion; it is a force that reorients one's entire life. Those who have had this inner contact for even just a moment can often come out of it changed, with a new perception of the sacred, a greater openness towards others, and a deep peace that is not dependent on external circumstances.

In a nutshell, spiritual ecstasy is one of the most significant moments of the inner journey: the moment when your love for the Divine or Truth becomes so overwhelming that it dissolves all distance, leaving only unity, silence, and light.

### **Feeling the rise of energy within the spine**

In unexpected and frequently silent moments, a profoundly different state of consciousness can emerge. This can happen after a prolonged mental effort, when the body relaxes completely, perhaps in a state that resembles deep sleep. While in a safe place, one can immerse themselves in silence, but eventually something changes.

Despite being asleep or in a liminal state between sleep and wakefulness, an intense, lucid awareness can arise, but with no bodily perception. In this state, the body appears distant and absent, but the consciousness is awake and responsive. A flow rising from within is perceived as energy moving along the axis of the spinal column. The culmination of this movement is an explosion of silent, profound, and inexpressible joy.

During these moments, rational thought is absent. There's no necessity for understanding or analyzing. Reasoning is replaced by intuition: you instantly understand that what you're experiencing is important, something that emerges like a MEMORY, like a reality you've always been familiar with.

Conscience recognizes something that has always been there, but was hidden until now. The reality that comes out is viewed as more resolute and genuine than any sensory experience, as if it were the very source of awareness.

When everything vanishes and the individual returns to their usual state, they commonly do so with a sense of calmness, serenity, and new clarity. Life resumes, but something has changed: a fresh understanding, a drive to take action, and a urge to alter oneself or one's environment may emerge in the following days.

There is no rational explanation for this experience. The final outcome is an unmistakable sense of truth and presence. It shows that the spiritual dimension is not simply an idea, but a reality that is experienced. And that it represents the most authentic direction towards which to strive.

### **Listening to internal sounds**

During the deep silence of the mind, there are reports of internal sounds that are not from the outside world. This experience is often the result of a persistent intention and inner disposition, with a focus on subtle listening and silent contemplation.

As soon as this attitude becomes stabilized, an undetectable sound, similar to a very light buzz, may suddenly appear. Over time and practice, this sound can transform into a delicate tinkling similar to tiny bells or a deep and distant sound of a bell that reverberates into infinity.

The experience of internal sound is not the same as other spiritual phenomena, such as the ascension of energy through the spinal axis. Despite this, it still comes with a sense of profound fulfillment, as if something crucial has finally been expressed. Although thoughts may be present on the fringes of consciousness, they are not disruptive to the state

of recollection: they remain in the background, like faint memories that need no attention.

The sound that is experienced internally has a comforting quality, as though it is coming from a more intimate and compassionate dimension of reality. The presence of it can lead to a spontaneous feeling of devotion that is not directed towards a specific entity, but rather an expression of wonder and gratitude for the beauty that unfolds. This devotion is not forced or fabricated, but rather flows like an internal river that is clear and natural.

There are moments when this sensation expands so vastly that it feels like one's being has split into countless fragments, each filled with love and happiness. In those moments, it becomes apparent that someone has achieved something they have sought, frequently unsuccessfully, through various other life experiences.

### **Breathlessness experience**

During their spiritual journey, some people report experiencing states in which their breathing seems to stop on its own. It's not about holding your breath or forcing an experience, it's a naturally occurring state that develops through awareness and internalization practices.

The path to this state involves practices such as *Japa* (the internal repetition of a sacred sound or divine name) and *spinal breathing*, which is a form of conscious breathing that directs attention along the spine axis. Over time, these techniques help to improve inner listening and calm the mind, leading to the breath slowing down to the point where it almost dissolves.

When this occurs, the individual may become immersed in a state of profound stillness. There is no feeling of shortness of breath, anxiety, or tension; instead, there is a steady and quiet recognition of a sublime state that provides a feeling of perfect freedom. Thoughts subside. The mind is silent. The body appears to be supported from within, with a sense of living presence.

In this state, opening your eyes can enhance the experience, as if the outside world were penetrated by a new transparency. Inner energy takes on a more tangible presence. Although it's difficult to describe in words, the impact is profound.

The emotional and psychological impact of this experience can be significant. For many, it signifies the eradication of ancient internal constraints. One feels free to be authentically oneself, no longer bound by rigid ideas, fears, or unconscious mental habits. In this new inner space, the desire to live fully may arise: reading, listening to music, traveling, creating, and exploring. All these activities are an expression of the newly

rediscovered joy and sense of expansion.

A paradox arises when one reaches the deepest silence and finds a renewed enthusiasm for life. Instead of being chaotic or disordered, this impulse is vitality that arises from inner freedom.

It's a fact that accessing such a state requires time, dedication, and a method. It's not sufficient to have curiosity or improvisation. Without consistent and well-directed practice, particularly with ways to calm the mind, it may never occur, even after many years of searching.

One of the primary pillars is simplicity, which involves the conscious and humble repetition of a sacred word or an inner sound, a technique commonly known as *prayer of the heart*, *inner prayer*, or *Japa* in many traditions. Saints and masters have cultivated this simple yet profound practice throughout the ages for the purpose of opening the mind to the path of silence and preparing the ground for higher states of consciousness.

Those who sincerely embark on this path can discover, even within a few months, a world of inner peace that seemed distant or even unattainable. What is the most significant challenge? Reversing the habit of overthinking and diverting attention. The true spiritual path starts here: the one that guides from the restless mind to the quietness of the heart.

### **The final point – The path of spirituality requires discernment and authenticity**

One may question why we should stop recounting spiritual experiences now, when there are so many more to enumerate. The answer is simple: not all internal experiences are authentic. Despite their intensity or evocativeness, certain experiences may be deceptions of the mind.

For example, a person may be able to affirm that they have reached a higher state of consciousness, like the *Samadhi* mentioned in spiritual texts. It's possible to believe that practices, guidance, or discipline are no longer necessary for them. In certain circumstances, what is experienced is only an illusion of imagination or a subtle form of spiritual self-hypnosis.

Distinguishing between reality and illusion can become extremely challenging, not just for the person involved, but also for those who are close to them.

Those who have received a sort of 'instant enlightenment' may stop searching, believing that they have already reached their destination. When the illusion is deeply rooted, it's not always possible to use words or experiences to bring them back into contact with reality.

Reiterating that **authentic spirituality is not a way to escape** is essential.

It's not a place designed to avoid human limitations, nor a reassuring fantasy. It is not a result of a mental imbalance, nor a desire to feel special. Contrary to popular belief, a mature spiritual journey is deeply rooted in objective reality: it allows us to accept our limitations, see ourselves clearly, and develop sincere and honest motivations.

The inner journey can result in the emergence of intense experiences, visions, profound intuitions, or even inexplicable phenomena. But the presence of these events does not necessarily indicate spiritual progress. The real test is the ability to put the mind in a state of silence, when it's not useful for carrying out the duties that life demands of us.

Authentic spiritual maturity requires awareness of one's own limitations. To avoid being swayed by the ego, it's important to develop a critical and vigilant attitude towards oneself, not just others. Humility is not a weakness but rather a strength: it is the quality that enables us to learn, restart, and walk with authenticity.

The spiritual path is not solely made up of exceptional experiences, but also small, everyday moments in which we are purely conscious without any thought. The ability to face even the most difficult trials is built there.

## **6. ABIDE BY THE ADVAITA TEACHING**

Regardless of the path taken, whether it be spiritual or meditative, I would like to offer a simple yet profound invitation: dedicate at least five or ten minutes every day to cultivating awareness of a truth that is not always easily understood, but can have a profound impact on how we approach the inner dimension.

This truth is about the essence of a reality that is commonly known as “Divine, Absolute, or simply Presence”. It's not necessarily about putting one's faith into an idea, but rather opening oneself up to the possibility of experiencing it, even if only briefly, with a part of yourself that is beyond the rational mind.

My quest for spiritual experience began and progressed with the help of the deepest emotions that emerged from my heart. They came from the Beauty I saw in so many things that life provided me. At a young age, I was strongly drawn to mystical and inner experiences, which captivated me not just on a rational level, but also on an emotional, intuitive, and visceral level.

I found that relying solely on logic and critical thinking was a limiting factor that was unbearable to me. It was challenging for me to explain to my friends that the most profound understanding of life's meaning cannot be achieved through philosophy, but rather through intuition, silent listening, and surrendering to profound emotions.

### **Emotion and thoughts on the path of spirituality**

There are various ways of understanding and relating to the world, but not all of them offer the same access to the deeper truth of things. There are individuals who grow up relying solely on rational thought, believing in it as their only trustworthy guide. Others, on the other hand, discover a more intuitive way of living, utilizing emotions to gain knowledge and guidance.

During my journey, I came to the conclusion that I belong to the second category: from a young age, I recognized emotions as a living and genuine phenomenon, capable of taking me beyond the limits of rationality.

For many, emotions don't appear to be reliable. Their presence is acknowledged, but they are frequently viewed as unstable or deceptive. Yet, when we are truly immersed in a profound emotion – whether it be wonder, love, gratitude, or genuine pain – we find ourselves in direct contact with life. In these moments, we lose our focus, but something

ignites within us: a deeper form of consciousness emerges.

Over time, I've come to understand that thinking is a valuable tool that's necessary for navigating the real world, analyzing, organizing, and understanding what happens in our society. But when it comes to approaching spiritual reality – which many call the Divine or simply the Mystery – it is through profound emotion and feeling that we can truly connect.

I slowly developed this awareness, but it only took root when I reached full maturity. Prior to that point, I had frequently observed genuine individuals who were eager to comprehend the sacred, but who only sought to accomplish this through rational reasoning. At times, they experienced disillusionment because they couldn't obtain satisfactory answers through logic and ended up losing faith in the spiritual dimension itself. Silent atheism, characterized by emptiness, dullness, and sometimes profound inner suffering, was a path taken by certain individuals.

In my opinion, this occurs when we rely solely on one method to explore the unknowable. In order to truly understand the mystery of life, we need to be able to hear what our own heart is saying. This inner Master has its own intelligence.

The heart is not just a seat for emotions, but also a center of intuitive awareness. To align with it means not blindly following every emotional impulse, but rather developing the ability to listen to what speaks within us with truth, depth, and inner coherence.

When we create space in our day – during times of calmness, silence, or pause – it can be natural to put aside reasoning and stop needing to analyze or explain for a moment. During these moments, it's possible to connect with the most authentic feeling that reveals what makes us alive: silent joy, inner peace, and the sensation of being in the right place at the right time.

Living in harmony with our hearts requires us to pay attention to what truly nourishes us and what makes our presence flourish. This practice is subtle and sometimes counter-intuitive, but it doesn't exclude the mind, but instead puts it in a different position: no longer in command, but serving deeper wisdom.

### **The spiritual path is marked by a balance between calmness and awareness**

To be authentic on the spiritual path, one must first and foremost have inner stability. This path cannot be pursued with confusion or frantic emotions. It is hard for those who experience constant emotional instability to find peace by pursuing a mystical practice as a remedy. The first step is to

cultivate a stable balance and calm that stems from a conscious choice and a genuine commitment to oneself.

With this mindset, I started my journey, guided by clear thinking and a plan that was both sober and rational. Using my calm and undisturbed mind, I gradually approached what many call the Divine. The process was not instantaneous, nor was it influenced by expectations. Instead, it was a matter of letting myself be guided by direct experience, beyond dogma or theory.

At first, my thoughts were not focused on how to lead my life in the world, nor did I wonder about humanity's problems or its collective destiny. I did not consider them irrelevant, but my path required a deep connection to the spiritual dimension, above all. Later, I matured my deepest convictions, which guide me in my daily life today. At the start, the only thing that mattered was the intimate encounter with the sacred, with its silent presence that required no words.

I studied the words of great masters, like Mother, Sri Ramdas, Ramana Maharshi, Lahiri Mahasaya, and Krishnamurti. It was not a speculative exercise, but a silent awakening. The readings made me feel more authentic and luminous, as they brought me closer to the most authentic and luminous part of my being. In that inner space, I found something that remained tranquil and profound, as if a still lake was reflecting the sky.

### **A contemplative look at the enigma of existence**

What follows is not a definitive truth, but merely a reflection that was born out of the silence of interiority. It is not claiming to provide definitive explanations or instructions. The thought is only intended to suggest, as if inviting contemplation.

It's possible that the reality around us seems to be mostly fragmented, as though we are only experiencing its surface. We live in a vast world, surrounded by billions of human beings, on a planet that is circling around a universe that is beyond our comprehension. In the midst of all of this, humility is unavoidable.

Our thoughts should not even attempt to find an ultimate meaning to this vastness, as the human mind is not designed to comprehend the infinite. Yet, it is inherently human to question, ask questions, and imagine. It's a natural gesture, just like breathing.

Despite our inability to find definitive answers or absolute truths, we can only cultivate an inner attitude of openness and wonder. It is in this humble, silent, free space that the spiritual path can take shape.

## **On the origin and return**

The intuition I feel in my heart drives me to believe that there is only one ultimate reality, which is often referred to as the Divine. Everything that exists, including beings, forms, thoughts, and energies, can be understood as a reflection of this original reality. It seems that every individual's existence is derived from it, like a ray of light coming from an invisible source, and it comes back to it sooner or later.

We are clueless about when or how this return will take place. The question of whether we will keep our individuality is nothing more than a mindless exercise; a subtle manifestation of our desire for control or permanence. The wisdom of those who have walked this earth reminds us that who we are in our deepest essence is not a separate entity from the Divine, but a manifestation of it. Not something that is *near* God, but something that is *a part* of God.

True spirituality is not about grasping truth with the mind, but rather about learning to live it. Recognizing that in every being and experience, there is a reflection of the One. And embracing the mystery of returning to that One with trust.

## **On the fullness of meditation**

Regardless of our spiritual path, meditation can be made more complete and profound by recognizing our most intimate nature.

Many sages, especially those from Eastern traditions, have taught us that every genuine inner journey must lead to an essential realization: the Divine is not distinct from us. Our essence already includes everything we venerate, everything we direct our devotion and love towards. It's not just a concept, but a living reality.

According to these traditions, there is only one substance in the universe, known as the Divine, and everything else is either a transitory form, a projection, or a dance of reflections. The single source would create every living being, experience, and fragment of reality as a spark.

It would be foolish and careless to abandon that inner state at the end of meditation for this reason. To contemplate this truth, it's crucial to halt for a few moments in silence, not to comprehend it with the analytical mind—for that would be useless—but to intuit it with the interior, with that silent part that knows, even without explanation. Meditation can only be transformed from a technique to a living experience through this form of listening, which is closer to the heart than to thought.

## **The Identity that is hidden**

Many spiritual traditions affirm that every human being is, in their deepest essence, a manifestation of the Divine itself. It's a straightforward statement to make, yet it's incredibly hard to comprehend. Understanding it mentally is one thing; living it fully is a different matter altogether.

According to tradition, those who truly comprehend this truth are experiencing their last incarnation, as they are never separated from the source. This understanding is elusive for most of us, like a distant echo. The reason for this is our continued identification with our ego, which constantly clings to the idea of being distinct from others and the whole.

The ego is not an enemy we should fight angrily, but a deep-rooted structure that has been with us for a long time. It is so solid that it seems unshakeable. Yet, it is not invulnerable. Starting the process of detachment requires a significant decision, almost a demonstration of inner courage. The ego shouldn't be denied, but we should acknowledge it and stop letting it define us completely. In order to succeed on this path, one must have perseverance, sincerity, and a silent will to stay committed. At the conclusion of this journey, we will not have the 'I' we know anymore, but a nameless presence that is vast and free, where everything is one and everything is connected.

Let's clarify the concept of *Tat Tvam Asi*. The teaching that has been given to us by the great Masters is: *Tat Tvam Asi* – "You are that." The awareness that is present in each of us is the Divine itself, but we cannot understand this fact because we are firmly imprisoned by the ego. *Tat* is a name that is immense, unpronounceable, the Divine. *Tvam Asi* is a term that means "That is you", indicating that you are both the Divine and yourself. Therefore, we are one with God. This teaching is a key aspect of *Vedanta* philosophy.

The journey to becoming aware of our true nature, acknowledging the Divine within us, and realizing that God and I are one, is lengthy and subtle. Rather than a simple intellectual conviction, it is a profound realization that is only uncovered at the end of an authentic inner journey.

The unity of what was previously seen as separate is revealed when this awakening occurs. Those who achieve this understanding do not accomplish anything new, but rather remember what has always been. Such a statement may be perceived as provocative or even unacceptable in certain cultural contexts. In other instances, it is welcomed with enthusiasm, as the natural culmination of a spiritual journey.

### **What is the starting point?**

Approaching this realization in a concrete manner means not leaving the meditative state too soon. When attention is drawn, a clear, non-mental understanding can emerge: our true essence is pure awareness, observing itself and dissolving into the silent ecstasy of unity.

This is the goal indicated by *Jnana Yoga*: a path in which one does not seek to "become" something, but to recognize what we have always been, without knowing it. No matter what path one takes, whether it's devotional, contemplative, active, or cognitive, it can be beneficial to set aside just a few minutes each day to allow this intuition to emerge. If time permits, we can extend this immersion; if time is limited, even a brief moment can be precious. It's more important to cultivate the quality of presence than the quantity of time. Silence is the perfect environment for the truth to be revealed effortlessly.

## 7. BLENDING INTUITION WITH PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

When we talk about building a strong spiritual life, it's crucial to clarify a fundamental point right away: it's not about conquering or destroying one's ego. Trying to suppress it results in repressing a part of ourselves that cannot be eliminated by its nature.

In order to follow the true spiritual path, we must learn to live with our ego, observe it consciously, and not let it control us. The spiritual path excludes shortcuts or magical solutions. The fanciful idea of “dissolving” the ego through a gesture of will or a sudden revelation is merely a fiction. We cannot leap towards final liberation: we are not "Ramana Maharshi"!

Inner growth is a process that gradually develops, involving commitment, presence, and continuous transformation. Liberation is not achieved by making a sudden leap, but through sincere and consistent actions. If we really want to advance spiritually, we must abandon the illusion of destroying our ego and start walking with it, realizing that even its shadows can teach us something.

### *Spiritual guidance through intuition*

The spiritual path is centered around **intuition**, so let's tackle it now. We must learn to listen to and cultivate this precious tool, which is the greatest aid at our disposal.

To have clear intuition, it is crucial to live with awareness rooted in the heart. This is the only way it can emerge with greater strength and become a reliable ally in our inner evolution.

Of course recognizing intuition does not simply mean noticing coincidences, synchronicity, or subtle forms of attunement with others, such as telepathy. It is a deeper experience that needs to be cultivated as a lifestyle.

Intuitive guidance should be our inner compass, guiding us, but it should always be accompanied by lucid, mature, and sustained reflection. Intuition differs from reasoning, but we eventually realize that intuition and reason are not mutually exclusive. To be honest, intuition doesn't hinder logical thinking; instead, it calms, guides, and enriches it.

Balanced reasoning can be built upon the foundation of good intuition. We human beings, however endowed with extraordinary inner potential, have inevitable limitations and 'blind spots.' Even intuition, however profound,

does not make us omniscient.

Precisely for this reason, it is important that it collaborate with our ability to reflect clearly. When these two forces unite – intuition and reason – it is as if a clear source adds a diamond of truth to our understanding.

On the spiritual path, intuition is also the most authentic tool for trying to imagine and sense the reality of the Divine. By doing so, we acquire inner assurance that a life devoted to the spiritual path is well-lived and filled with valuable treasures that cannot be measured.

Intuition is not just a way to guide, it also helps us survive. Relying on it is a way to renew our spiritual practice, especially when the path appears sterile or repetitive.

Changing your spiritual routine – possibly a meditation practice that doesn't resonate – is a courageous act at those moments. When you listen to intuition with sincerity, it always offers new directions, new ideas, and more authentic and creative ways to explore your path.

Good intuitions are not uncommon: it happens frequently, even if we don't always acknowledge them. Intuition isn't just about pointing out what's not working – like a flawed routine – it can also provide us with innovative insights, profound inspirations, and completely new perspectives.

#### *A lesson to be learned from intuition*

I am willing to admit that I have neglected wisdom and prudence, particularly when it comes to taking care of my health for a long time. A few years ago, I was hospitalized due to negligence, and I acknowledge that it was entirely my fault. I had disregarded the signs of intuition that had been warning me for quite some time.

I ignored those clear and insistent internal messages because I had decided not to give them importance. I had wasted the most valuable gift that intuition can provide: the ability to prevent, correct, and guide.

It was only later, as my receptiveness increased, that I started to give up the bad habits that had taken over my life. I started to adopt healthier, more mindful behaviors – which are the ones I should have always chosen.

It was then that a new form of existence began for me: more attentive, more authentic, more aligned with my true well-being.

#### *Collective consciousness and intuition*

It's uncertain whether intuition, like any other skill, can be sharpened through practice. It's evident that cultivating it requires a state of inner calm

and a quiet mind, as is the case during meditation. Everyone acknowledges the importance of serenity in making sound decisions.

Sometimes intuition fails to emerge clearly in our daily lives. Even in such moments, it still manages to act by planting seeds in our subconscious that can germinate in more mature times, guiding us in subtle yet profound ways.

It's common for the mind's constant urgings to distract our awareness, making it hard to hear the voice of intuition. Even so, it persists in its quest to be heard and find a place among the internal noise.

I firmly believe that when our intuition flows freely and is in harmony with our will, we are able to connect with a larger dimension: that of the *collective consciousness*. To truly listen to what intuition – and the collective consciousness – are trying to convey to us, silence is always necessary, with a special emphasis on inner silence.

The consciousness that C.G. Jung intuited and described seems to have always guided humanity towards a greater and more complete understanding. The most sensible decision we can make is to move consciously towards a state of unity with it – a path will lead us to a more authentic, lucid life, and more harmony with everything.

### *Acquiring knowledge while progressing*

Learning is why we are here. The quality of learning is intrinsic to consciousness and an essential part of our nature. We all, in some way or another, experience, gain understanding, and develop skills throughout life. These skills allow us to make meaningful choices, and these choices determine the most authentic direction of our path.

Throughout our lives, we have the option to develop certain skills and, at least temporarily, neglect others. The most significant thing is not the experience we have in different “seasons” of our lives, but rather how we choose to face them with awareness and responsibility.

I've encountered several times of crisis, moments when I felt like I was unable to accomplish anything. After all, I realize that these moments were often coincident with phases where I listened too much to others' opinions and tried to imitate their behaviors, losing sight of my own inner voice. Whenever I emerged from that darkness, it was because I had finally made the decision to follow my intuition.

However, I also comprehended another important dynamic: when I adhered too rigidly to my beliefs, I ended up completely ignoring intuition.

As I look back on my life, I try to honestly observe how I handled the most

important decisions. It's challenging to provide self-criticism that is honest and merciless. Whenever I failed to follow my heart's voice – by hurting others or ignoring their feelings – I had to pay the price.

Reflecting on the past can be a shocking experience. It's a painful thing to admit that we've trampled on others' beliefs and emotions, even if we didn't intend to. Yet, from this pain comes the most authentic drive to change, grow, and continue on our journey with greater attention, humility, and openness.

### *Intuition, courage, and self-kindness*

There are individuals who appear to have no intuition whatsoever. Yet, if we are honest, we must admit that we have had clear and useful insights more than once, but we have chosen to ignore them. Why? Due to a lack of trust.

If we're willing to forgive the mistakes of others, we have to learn to do the same for ourselves. Being able to accept our own mistakes is a sign of maturity. It is a component of the process of maturation.

Those who hold the belief that they have complete control over their inner knowledge are often caught in the illusion trap. This is why it is essential to keep an open mind and never stop questioning our own certainty.

Intuition necessitates the courage to recognize, trust, and implement it. But that courage must never turn into arrogance, because that would be the first step towards failure.

Authentically using intuition means being fully aware of what we say and do. People who have made a significant impact on history, whether it's spiritual or human, have always acted with inner firmness and deep responsibility. This is the course to follow.

A valuable suggestion: we should learn to recognize the mistakes of others with both clarity and understanding. We need to work hard to comprehend what is behind their behavior, capture their emotional state and the motives for their actions. Then, let's bring that same compassion into our own lives.

Looking at ourselves with humility is the first step towards authentic change. Only in this way can we find the courage to let go of what we were attached to – even if it defined us, even if it gave us security. We all have flaws. That's why we deserve the same kindness as we would give a dear friend.

If our inner dialogue is healthy and sincere, it won't lead to paralysis with regret or pride. On the contrary, it motivates us to evolve, not to remain still, and not to be hypnotized by what we believe we are.

## 8. THE ULTIMATE CALL

What happens during the final stages of the spiritual journey? In other words, what is the appropriate course of action? An irresistible, profound perception can emerge in the heart if the journey has been taken with sincerity and dedication, which we might refer to as **the final calling**.

In that instant, the seeker understands the true intention that had been driving him down that path since the beginning. It seems as if the universe is preparing to back him up for his final move in a silent yet powerful agreement.

The final step involves **realizing that we have complete control over the mind** and can clearly see all the illusions that have harmed our lives and impoverished our spiritual journey.

The mind has frequently degraded the brightest moments of our existence, increased difficulties, and immortalized failures. It is important that it is restored to its original function: a clear and rejuvenated tool, useful for dealing with the demands of everyday life, but not the center of our being anymore.

As a result, a new phase commences. Every moment of meditation, or rather, every time we come together in our most authentic self, becomes more meaningful and broader. As awareness expands and touches us deeply, it reveals the full meaning of the journey.

Although we have not yet been able to define a precise method – that is, to consciously choose a specific spiritual path – , the original intention has remained unchanged: the sincere push towards union with what transcends the experience of a purely materialistic existence.

We can simplify our daily practice by enhancing and then deepening only what truly calms the mind, until it becomes completely silent.

Despite not seeing the “light at the end of the tunnel”, intuition has always been certain. It's time to make a decision and move decisively towards that light, towards the most profound realization.

The seeker is now capable of being their own Master: they no longer depend on external guides or organizations, but confidently follow their own inner guidance. Meditation is a direct result of intuition and personal experience.

Throughout our lives, there may have been many circumstances that prevented us from pursuing our full spiritual discipline. We've frequently

followed advice that was not in line with our true nature, leading us to lose touch with our inner truth.

This truth, however, sooner or later must emerge. Dissolving all mental limitations, releasing ourselves from conditioning, and living in harmony with who we truly are is essential.

It's important to have the courage to be authentic and stand on our own two feet. The final stretch of the journey can only be completed by awakening a profound inner strength. It is necessary to revitalize dormant energy, overcome immobility, and initiate the final transformation.

By calmly reflecting on our life experiences, we can recognize that our uncertainties, problems, and mistakes stemmed from distortions suggested by our thoughts and accepted without discrimination.

A new way of experiencing spiritual practice is created as a result of this awareness. No matter your discipline, it's important to know how to set aside your mind and immerse yourself in pure awareness with fearlessness and limitless depth.

The stage is when inner strength is consolidated and clear thinking emerges and asserts itself. This enables us to continue on the path with courage and determination.

It's important to listen to what our true abilities lead us to do and have confidence in them. It's important to approach each practice session with enthusiasm and curiosity, just like a child discovering the world.

Our truest nature, which is often neglected, can bring energy and vitality to everything we do, making it clear what has already arisen within us.

It's essential to avoid becoming obsessed with predicting the results of the practice.

We shouldn't burden ourselves with doubts about failure. Even a brief state of silence and pure awareness can be an immense gift.

The seeker is now fully present “in the field”: not merely a fearful spectator, but a conscious traveler. He acts with balance between confidence and risk, knowing that those who move with awareness go further than those who remain still and think.

The destination can be pictured by the mind, but only the heart knows how to get there. When we devote ourselves to an activity that aligns with our soul, we experience profound authenticity.

The inner spirit is revealed and the mind becomes quiet, leading to pure awareness that is rooted in the heart's feelings.

In this state, one becomes “entangled” in stillness, not an escape, but a

rejuvenation: the mind recharges, freed from fragmentation, and restores its natural clarity. Tranquility transforms into ecstasy, a sensation so intense that techniques are forgotten.

The practice is no longer led by a person: it is the Universe that flows through them. When we are in this state, we understand the distinction between what completely takes over us, making us forget time, and what instead slows us down and weighs us down. The only way to find true joy is to allow yourself to immerse yourself in pure awareness beyond time.

To succeed in all of this, one must have total confidence in their inner choices. If we can push away thoughts, we must have the courage to not fear what we will find: if our heart is pure, we will experience purity; if it is empty, we will experience emptiness – we must accept it to understand our limitations.

Let's clarify one thing: if we experience emptiness, then we finally recognize that it merely expresses our need for rest, and it must be welcomed with respect. If we are told by reason that our spiritual journey was not sincere, but just an illusion of a human being seeking mental health, we need to be courageous to accept this truth, even if it seems devastating.

But, for the most genuine souls, this is not the case: for them, emptiness is merely the threshold that precedes the most intense happiness.

### *Reflecting on my journey*

Today, I reminisce about the journey I've taken. I review the disciplines I've encountered over the years, and I recognize those that are more significant than others – the only ones capable of bringing the mind into a calm state, as a lake slows down at sunset.

My decision was to stay with them. I am still practicing them, maybe in a more essential and true way. I am not afraid of simplicity. Only those who have genuine respect for this silent teacher can uncover its hidden power.

I keep reminding myself of the purpose of this journey, which is to learn to live as pure awareness, without being dragged by the constant noise of thoughts.

In the silence that remains, I contemplate the teachings of those great souls who, over time, have improved humanity's collective consciousness.

They were able to change the world and weren't afraid to defy norms. Their inner strength and unwavering courage enabled them to break the mold of ingrained habits.

Their uniqueness was the key to making change possible, regardless of

how far they differed from common norms.

Thus, I make an effort to obtain inspiration from them. I am willing to follow my truth with courage, knowing that this is the key to the brightest and happiest period of my life.