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# Being at Home

Poetry, Philosophy and Expressions

2008 - 2012

ROHITASH CHANDRA

 SFF Press

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You will not be in peace  
when your own desires  
take you away  
from your centre  
from your home.

Peace is within you  
Come back home.



## **Author's Note**

### **I**

I write to get down to the truth so that we can change for the better. I don't expect my writings to be accepted, but questioned so that we can have a philosophical discussion that will refine my perception of the truth and we can all breathe in the light of knowledge.

### **II**

Being with your inner self is a state of meditation, that is, 'Being at Home'.

### **III**

The 'I' is the identity given to you by the world. This identity is a result of your gain and loss, joy and sorrows. This identity cannot fully define you as there is another identity which is your natural state - the true identity - the "witness", the "source" within. We suffer due to the identity given to us, due to the "I" we accumulated, due to the expectations from others and from ourselves that we struggle to meet. We struggle to be "acceptable" in the society. We struggle to make a name for ourselves, but in this struggle we lower the quality of our lifestyles and there is restlessness. We pursue objects and achievements that we actually do not need, but are merely imposed to us through commercial fashion, social media and popular culture. Renunciation does not mean that you have to go to the forest or become segregated, it means that you become aware of the identity given to you and regain your true identity - that which you are naturally.

#### **IV**

There are some lines in my poems that I do not actually understand but have yet expressed it. It seems as if they have come from another part of me, that voice within, and it will take some time for me to fully know the meaning. Art does not need a meaning and artists are just vessels to deliver the message of nature's beauty in a form that is beyond the imaginations of the point of ones eyes.

#### **V**

Everything I say has been said already, in a number of ways, and yet, the colourful silence wants me to say it again.

#### **VI**

I have nothing to protect, neither science nor religion, no sides I can take, my comments may contradict my own statements, as with time I discover the truth, old expressions of truth lose their value. I have no one to please, I am a slave of the truth within.

## Foreword

'Being at Home' features a collection of poems and philosophical discussions on the intricacies of life by an aspiring young poet, Dr. Rohitash Chandra, that illustrates the potential and many talents of Pacific people which are yet to be fully recognised and nurtured. The writings of Rohitash play an important role in encouraging other Pacific people to embrace their creativity and talent and share their gifts that will have a positive impact on society as well as become continuously influenced and shaped in the process.

Rohitash is indeed one of the poets whose writings are very interesting and meaningful to read because his poems and philosophical discussions reflect innovation, creativity, inspiration, earnestness and sincerity. It is certainly remarkable to see how a young poet grapples to make sense of his surroundings and the way one's life unfolds as he attempts to shed light on some of the most delicate and sensitive areas of human existence. His philosophical underpinnings challenge one to think 'outside of the box' and question the subtleties of life by at least pondering upon one's beliefs, thoughts and behaviour. Although life in itself is a mystery and at times one cannot fully comprehend and express why certain things exist or happen the way they do, this work stimulates one to deter from always taking things for granted and take a closer look at oneself and tap into the inner voice. Meditation and contemplation pave the way to self-realisation that allows one to continuously evolve and grow as a person that in the long term impacts and moulds the broader community.

A cornerstone of this book is the authors personal meditation of 'being with himself' that resonates with 'being at home'. The poems in this book portray the psychological and spiritual journey of the author from 2008 to 2012, a special phase in his life as a PhD student in New Zealand. The humbling PhD journey has certainly ignited the smouldering embers within the author to express his inner-most feelings of himself and for his surroundings in a broader context and consequently become more aware of his inner being and recognise the bliss of being at home with oneself.

Furthermore, this book showcases the ongoing battle within oneself between logic and intuition. 'Being at Home' illustrates a sincere and heart-felt expression of the dynamics between logic and intuitive thought processes. Consequently, alluding to the complex worldview of 'I' – is 'I' the identity given to you by the world or is 'I' the identity mirrored by a grounding source from within or is 'I' a blend of both the identities that constantly fluctuates and moves up and down the continuum to varying degrees. Regardless of what one's worldview of 'I' is the underlying phenomena is the consequence of the expectations that one has accumulated with time either from others or from oneself. This book stimulates the mind to reflect on the continuous struggle to be accepted by society and by oneself and the transformation of oneself in the pursuit for true identity.

It is with much pleasure that I recommend everyone to read the enchanting 'Being at Home' and feel the emotions expressed by the author that is sure to make you smile, laugh, cry or dwell in deep contemplation. This captivating book is a remarkable work of talent that will make an impression in the repository of literature. I strongly feel that 'Being at Home' will allow many poetry fans and philosophical thinkers to indulge in an amazing literature treat.

Finally, I must say that this book brings back memories of my own PhD journey from 2008 to 2012 that was indeed a learning experience and a fruitful and eventful journey that constantly urged me to listen to my inner voice, accept life's challenges, take reflective breaks, appreciate life and recognise my true identity and consequently lose some elements of my naive thinking and evolve a more grounded person.

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I thank the eastern mystics and philosophers for their eternal wisdom that has been the leading drive behind this book.



## **Dedication**

To the Girmitiya ancestors  
who toiled the soil that defines us today.

*In memory of Mrs. Reddy, Saraswati College*

*In memory of my Dada, Mr. Ram Jeet*



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## PART I: POETRY



## **In the Division**

There is  
a seed  
between  
the hedges  
of theism  
and atheism.

Water the seed  
and a Bodhi tree<sup>1</sup>  
will emerge.

In the gravity  
that divides you  
between science  
and spirituality;  
between philosophy  
and mysticism,  
the shade of  
the Bodhi tree  
will shelter you  
and give you peace.

---

1. Bodhi tree is the sacred tree where Buddha was enlightened:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bodhi\\_Tree](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bodhi_Tree)

## **Into the River**

The light  
within you  
showed me  
the way to you.

I came  
you closed the door  
and thought  
I never tried.

That rose is  
alive within me  
I can feel its fragrance  
and you say  
it is dry  
and dead.

You have built  
those walls  
around you  
afraid  
the arrow of  
expectations  
will wound again.

In this ride  
the journey itself  
will transform us,  
the destination  
is only a mirage  
created by the mind.

I am thirsty  
for that touch.

Selfless.

Enter the river  
with me  
once again.  
Be my love.

## **The Mind**

The mind of a man  
is an autonomous machine,  
seemingly in the waking state  
and yet not awakened;  
a seed not yet sprout  
but rather alive.

An organ  
a thinking machine;  
the central processing unit  
attached to the network  
of family and friends  
and prone to infection  
from the virus  
of desires and expectations  
from the bugs of  
attachment  
in the entangling web  
of life.

## **Migration**

On the air  
above the birds  
the jet engine is roaring  
like a hungry lion.  
We are hanging  
in between  
the sky blue  
the ocean wide.

The clouds  
are down below.  
What was considered big  
is now small  
a different view  
a different perspective.

Up the ladder  
with ambitions heavy on back  
in hope of happiness  
this ship has been fuelled with dreams.

The grass is greener  
on the other side,  
but a culture and tradition is lost.

I am thirsty  
there is an ocean to drink  
but it's too salty

### **The Right to Kill?**

The rhinoceros beetle  
is upside down, struggling.  
I gaze at it.

The hen lays an egg.  
Within a few minutes  
I can have an omelette.

They keep the calf  
away from the cow.  
I can have some milk.

The calf is growing  
for the slaughterhouse.  
I can have some meat.



## **Dinner**

Time  
will wither my skin  
in the mirror  
of everyday life.

Steak and ham  
sizzle in the pan  
Every day,  
I walk closer  
to my grave.

I belong  
to the most intelligent category  
and have the authority  
to feed  
on the lesser ones.

Only six feet deep  
the justice  
is done  
when the little worms  
feed on me.

It's their turn.

## **The Ocean is Dry**

I feel the ocean dry  
dead fish decay on the sand  
the coral in the reef has stopped growing  
losing its rainbow colours  
turning white and cement-like.

The rain tree is shredding leaves now  
soon it be wood for the fireplace  
The soil is crumbling, without moisture  
into dust, into a desert dry  
The river that once used to be here  
is dry and dead.

Our world  
our dreams  
from dark green have faded into yellow  
the edges of the leaf have turned brown.  
Brown wins; it finally crumbles  
the leaf into soil.

She turns into the clouds that rain  
that soak my clothes - enter my skin  
into my veins - into my heart  
troubling my mind and spirit.

Just like that - the string is broken.  
There is no control  
when the wind has won the kite.

Alcohol treats but cannot heal  
this weary feeling - this stain  
the complains in this heart.

The two hour phone calls  
the butterflies have gone  
the ocean has turned lifeless.

This broken bridge rusts scars deep  
Just like that  
we drown and drown.

## **Longing**

We share  
the loneliness  
unbearable.  
The equation  
of our lives  
insolvable.

We listen  
to the same song  
over and over again  
winding in those moments  
by the shore  
by the tree  
gazing  
at the tides  
and the sand dry  
and at thirst.

Between us  
is the ocean  
and you know  
neither can sail.  
I try to cheat  
and drift in my thoughts  
clinging  
to your songs,

clinging  
to your thoughts  
I drift and drown.

The food  
has lost its taste  
The kitchen  
longs for your hand  
The bed is light.

The night  
moonless  
longs for light.  
The roots are dry  
from the summer  
longing for rain.

## **At the Park**

The lights  
the night  
the beats  
the coming together  
the touch  
the smell of her hair  
that intensity  
that connectivity  
filled the long void in me.

I turned towards her  
like a compass needle  
towards the magnet.  
There was no need to speak  
or exchange  
any human expression.

Our connectivity was clear  
the night was cold  
and alcohol was conquering the fear,  
it brought us together.  
We sat in the park  
and pondered,  
why do we understand each other  
so well?

The heat from our bodies  
conquered the dark  
and the coldness of the entire world.

It was the coming together  
of two beings  
from different worlds.  
For a moment we conquered  
those worlds.

Slowly  
it faded,  
fear came back  
into our system  
the alcohol dissolved  
and the emotions intensified  
the fearful mind  
locked us in the dark  
dungeons of the night.  
We became aware  
that this togetherness is not meant to be,  
we have our destiny to fulfil  
and desires we must hold.

Now the world is real  
and our feelings are locked  
in some closet in the backyard  
We both think about it  
from time to time,  
and give some justification

to that moment.  
Maybe it was love,  
or just an illusion  
in the fragment  
of the unconquerable  
hands of time.



## **The Prison of My Mind**

I see the world  
as you wanted me to see.

Though these eyes are open  
you have blinded me.

The media and the temples  
I am a puppet of your experiments  
my life - your conclusions.

I have become  
all that you wanted me to be  
I earn and turn  
in the illusion of your destiny.

I lose my breath  
in fulfilling your desires  
I turn and turn  
lost in your maze.

A prisoner  
of attachments and ambitions  
the desires are the walls,  
the emotions are the bars  
and fear strengthens this cage.

I am the prisoner  
in the prison  
of my own mind.

## **In that State**

I become a drop of ink  
and lose my intensity  
in the wholeness of the ocean.

All is Nothing.  
Nothing becomes Everything  
Zero and Infinity are one  
and there is silence.

I am naive like a child  
and wise as a sage.  
I move in and out of myself  
and yet remain constant.

I gulp a breath of love  
and a flower blossoms in me.  
I become the breeze  
and move in the trees.  
I feel ripe like a Guava  
and tender as a baby's skin  
I am more aware of myself.

I break free from my ego  
free from the shadow of my desires  
I feel like a river flowing.  
Soon, I will become the ocean.

I know that life has been a dream  
now I have woken from this Maya<sup>2</sup>  
and experience the Brahman<sup>3</sup>  
where 'You' and 'I' become 'One'.

---

2. Maya is illusion or a perception of a projected reality of the environment in Indian philosophy:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maya\\_\(illusion\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maya_(illusion))

3. Brahman is ultimate reality in Indian philosophy:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brahman>

## **A Better Place**

When we raise from our consciousness  
from the self-centeredness of 'I and mine',  
then the world will be a better place.

When we realize that the inner-self  
the spirit in me and you, are part of the higher Being  
God is expressed in different names and forms  
then the world will be a better place.

When we realize that there is only one Truth  
but different interpretations of it  
then the world will be a better place.

When we realize that with different representations  
rituals and traditions  
we refer to the same source  
then the world will be a better place.

When we realize that we all are here  
for the same purpose  
then the world will be a better place.

When we realize that we need  
to fulfil our hunger  
and there is enough food for us all,  
so we need not go to war  
then the world will be a better place.

When we realize that pain and pleasure  
are both common in us  
then the world will be a better place.

When we realize that death will come  
to all of us one day  
irrespective of race, religion and wealth  
then the world will be a better place.

When we realize that underneath the skin  
the veins in you and me  
carry out the same functionality  
irrespective of our race and religion  
then the world will be a better place.

When we become aware of our similarities  
and free our minds  
from the differences  
then the world will be a better place.

## **Love is**

Natural and subtle like gravity  
that keeps us intact  
with this earth, with this soil.

Selfless like the dolphin  
that would save a man, naturally.

Power with discipline  
that sustains a healthy living  
with the environment clean.

Hope, for the endangered in the wild,  
a breath of life for the suffocating child.

Prayer from an atheist  
and the strength  
that gives freedom to the spirit.

Truth that unfolds  
from experience and contemplation  
and the song of science and reason.

Joy, that pours from selfless service  
as beautiful as the smile of a baby.

Cosmic dance of Shiva<sup>4</sup>  
the energy which drives our existence.  
which makes up the universe  
and sustains the breath of life.

Dance of Krishna<sup>5</sup> and Radha<sup>6</sup>  
the affection of mother Yashoda<sup>7</sup>.

Morality based on selflessness  
when there is oneness.

Concept of God  
that connects the spirit and the mind  
knowledge that unites  
all that our ignorance is breaking apart.

---

4. Shiva is considered as the supreme God in some Hindu sects. He is part of the Hindu trinity where he is depicted as the destroyer and transformer of the universe: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shiva>

5. Krishna is the eighth avatar of the supreme God Vishnu in Hinduism: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krishna>

6. Radha is the childhood friend of Lord Krishna and his spiritual love. Radha is also seen as Goddess in some devotional Hindu sects: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radha>

7. Yashoda is the foster-mother of Lord Krishna: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yashoda>



## Love and Mysticism

There is an emptiness  
that remains  
when the cup is full  
and yet Love sustains.

In Love, there is freedom  
from the shadow of selfish desires  
and addiction to machines  
that are plugged into wires.

Meditate and become infinite  
out of the cage  
Do not let them contain you  
Drift in the ocean.  
Gyan<sup>8</sup> will lead you to freedom.

Align the mind to be  
in oneness with your Being.  
Logic will integrate with intuition.  
Wholeness is always there  
yet unseen.

---

8. Wisdom in Hindi and Sanskrit

## **The Spiritual Evolution**

Deep inside you  
a spark flames the candle  
and something asks you  
to find a way for a change.

You will find yourself  
admiring the tadpoles  
soaking in the island rain.  
You become closer to nature  
breathe in the open air.  
Your consciousness rises  
free balloon in the sky.  
Thoughts occupy your mind  
about them - their suffering  
you notice and feel more  
than others can.

You thirst for answers  
about the meaning and purpose of life  
your mind contemplates on your very  
existence  
and you become the wave  
that rises from the ocean within.

Rather than changing  
oxygen to carbon dioxide  
you will realize

the higher purpose of life.  
You embrace life  
with arms open wide.

### **The Mind Crisis**

I lie down  
by the coconut tree  
under the starry night.

A mosquito rises  
with my dreams  
and irritates my ear.

Your fears  
are covering me as a blanket  
over my shivering body.

This mosquito and those dreams  
disturb and divide me  
with what is  
and what has to become.

I need that spark  
deep inside  
to flame me from within.

Someday  
there will be no need  
of these blankets  
to keep them away.

There will be  
enough blood  
in my veins  
to feed those mosquitoes  
that rise with my dreams.

I meditate and fall  
in that void colourful  
where you cannot follow me  
where I am one  
with time and space

I shall be whole again  
in peace  
with the void colourful  
within me  
and gulp the coconut  
from this tree.

## **Mother Nature**

The ground soft and green  
turns concrete  
electrical lights and wires  
fill the streets.

Dead bamboos  
are drifting lifeless,  
by the factory  
the river of life suffocates.

The birds struggle for life  
in the shooting season.  
The hedges are trimmed  
and the roses are plucked  
without any reason.

The rose with its stem  
relies on a vase with water.  
The man in a canoe  
is lost in an ocean  
yet he is thirsty.  
He dehydrates  
the petals fade  
slowly death wins life.

The body breathes on tubes  
in the hospital room  
In the tiny pen  
the pig can barely move.

The fridge is filled to its ceiling  
blood and meat freeze  
They die; we live  
There is something to eat.

## **We Become One**

You are the river.  
In the rainy seasons of life  
the streams have washed  
poured into you.  
The water is muddy  
unclear.

You move from your centre  
break the banks.

I am thirsty  
I gaze at you  
from the banks  
waiting for you  
to become clear  
to be yourself  
at your centre  
unaffected by them  
so that I can merge  
into you  
and we  
become one.

## **Sugarcane**

The bullocks lead the fair  
of the morning dew  
a history of barefoot  
thin old legs  
imprints on the soil.  
The body is frail  
yet there is hope to return  
to a distant motherland  
across the seven seas.  
That longing defined  
the century of the Girit.

The colonial whip reminds the skin  
about the power of the white master  
and the helplessness of the brown slave.  
In between the whippings  
there is pain  
there is silence  
and the thoughts take refuge  
in the motherland  
when life was complete.



A century has passed  
the despair has been washed  
away with the waves of time.  
Tall buildings grew like a forest  
from the soil of their sweat and blood.  
Then the coups swept us all  
into the flood.

The polar bear has left  
you have regained most of the land  
I am a fragment of this soil  
the forests have taken over  
the cane field is a distant memory.  
Our voices echo in the slums  
that encircle the buildings  
that grew from our sweat and blood.

## **Ecstasy**

Come join  
this celebration  
where You and I  
get completely destroyed  
and yet we remain.

Water the plant  
within you  
let the flower  
blossom  
let its fragrance  
intoxicate you  
so you lose  
your ego  
and gain  
yourself.

## **Broken Marriages**

You have lured  
a polygamous animal  
into a monogamous cage  
you call it virtue  
and religion.

Iron rusts  
fairly in salt-water  
in suppression  
rises the bubbles of aggression  
and the fish from the river  
suffocates in salt-water.

The mirror is blurry  
Lust was mistaken for love.  
I cannot expect rain in this desert.  
We gaze at each other again  
You and I, remain selfish.

So forth, the cycle continues  
a new generation is born  
the metal rusts.  
Here I am  
sane in a society  
pretending,  
everything is fine.

## **Spiritual Love**

In this love  
I become the leaf  
that floats  
in the river  
aimlessly.

I behave  
like a drunkard  
yet no alcohol  
in my veins.  
There is silence  
from within,  
no side-effects.

This is bliss.

## **Love is Selfless**

Only in the absence  
of the ego  
the fish can breathe  
in muddy water  
in its absence  
the waves  
raised in the storm  
can settle.

It rains  
the flower of love blossoms  
from that nothingness within  
you are soaked in it - selfless.

When the other  
becomes of more concern  
than yourself  
you are in Love.

## **Wholeness**

In between me  
and the ultimate reality  
there is a cloud of thoughts  
the thunder of emotions  
and judgements that fall as rain  
the fear of life and death  
this Maya (illusion)  
created by the mind.

I wait for that fine day  
when the storm is cleared  
when this flight is not lured  
by the clouds  
I get there  
open the door  
and lose myself  
in that wholeness.

## **In the Circle**

You have crossed  
the fence that protects me  
from the storms of life.

You have entered  
the circle  
of my Being.

There is  
a garden  
with seeds  
yet to be watered  
as it does not rain.

I am pondering  
how long will you stay here  
how long will it remain.

## **Spiritual Atheist**

A religious man is hunchbacked  
with the load of traditions and rituals  
weathered in history  
in denial of life.

A scientific atheist drinks  
from the tap of reason  
but constrained to logic  
and in denial of the light  
that flames the candle of life.

A spiritual atheist is open-ended  
a balloon free in the sky  
unbound by the gravity of logic  
from institutionalized religion  
loose and natural  
there is no seriousness  
a holistic view of life.



## **Heartbroken**

I am heartbroken  
not because the flower  
is absent from my garden.  
It did not blossom  
as I expected.

I cannot blame  
the flower  
for being natural  
now that I know  
I am a slave  
of my expectations.

## **Tropical Rain**

The trees and the flowers  
sing to me as the drops  
torrent the corrugated iron roof  
after the days heat and shine  
I am moved by the thought of you  
alive like the forest  
awakened in the breeze.

The weather wins over  
this man again,  
sweat dry on my skin  
I get as far as I have ever been  
cleansed and freed  
from the clouds in my mind  
alive, I become one  
with a drop of rain.

## **The Laws of Attraction**

*On the bodily level*

butterflies in the stomach  
we procreate and separate  
a puppet of emotions and attachments  
we face different destinations.

*On the intellectual level*

we debate and yet there are no arguments  
we stand strong in the storm of life  
and face the same destination.

*On the spiritual level*

in the vast ocean  
you and I, merge into one  
and become the destination.

## **My Religion**

In my religion  
my heart is a temple  
my intellect is a sacred book  
compassion is a ritual  
kindness is a tradition  
love is devotion  
selflessness is a prayer  
and life itself  
is God.

## The Loop of Life

We come alone  
we go alone.  
We leave everything  
including the body  
and everyone  
family and friends  
behind.

We carry on  
the experience and knowledge  
from this journey  
for another to come;  
this is *Karma*<sup>9</sup>.

The cycle goes on  
till termination;  
this is *Samadhi*<sup>10</sup>.

Life is a  
    *while (true)*  
        { ... }  
loop.

---

9. Karma is the philosophy of action in Indian philosophy that define the cycle of cause and effect: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karma>

10. Samadhi is the highest state of consciousness in Indian philosophy that is also known as Nirvana in Buddhism:  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samadhi>

## **The Circus of Thoughts**

Among the circus  
of thoughts  
that rise from  
an organ  
known as the mind  
there is a witness  
that your thoughts  
constantly ignore.

That witness  
is the eye  
in the cyclone  
with gusts of thoughts.

That witness is you.

You are not your thoughts  
You are not your mind  
You are not your body  
Your body feels the pain  
not you.  
Your mind is stressed  
not you.

Be one  
with the witness  
this is your true self  
know who you are  
and you will conquer life.

### **Cause and Effect**

Love is the cause.  
Humility, kindness  
and compassion  
are its effect.

We are the effects  
of the main cause.  
In Samadhi  
we become  
the cause again.  
We become Love.  
One with God.

## **Live**

Live not  
to please the world.  
to follow their rules.  
to become something.

Rejoice  
and renounce the world  
become whole  
undivided  
by their logic  
by their absurdness  
of their mundane truths  
and belief systems.

Live to grow  
into nothing.  
Become a nobody  
and you will  
become whole  
once again.



## **Beyond our Control**

We can sow the seed  
nurture and water  
but for it to actually sprout  
grow and blossom  
is beyond our control.

We can enrol in the university  
attain all the knowledge  
in the world,  
but for wisdom to actually blossom  
is beyond our control.

Love and wisdom  
subtle and natural  
sold in no market  
taught in no university.  
It flourishes from within  
in that silence  
in that light  
beyond our control.

The trees rise and fall  
the plants flower  
dry and crumble  
the heart beats all life

and ceases - all of a sudden.

Although we can plan  
we can seek  
some things in life  
is beyond our control.

### **Maya and Brahman**

This world  
we project  
with our mind  
is illusionary.

This world  
is full of our  
likes and dislikes  
judgements on people  
on ideas and objects.

We verify reality  
with historical knowledge  
and scientific methods.

This world is full of ignorance  
where we see  
what we want to see  
believe  
what we want to believe.

This world is Maya.

That world  
free from our mind  
free from judgements  
is the true reality.

That world is Brahman.

## **Mundane**

Join this celebration  
where the hearts dance wild  
and yet there is silence.

You will flow freely  
and break the banks  
that hold  
and contain you.

Be notorious and calm  
dance in this aimless circle  
let them complain.

Leave their pool  
stagnant and mundane.

You flow freely.  
Do not stop.

## **The Sieve**

This sieve cannot hold  
the pebbles  
of joy and sorrow  
for long.

The stream of life is strong.  
It will carry them along  
and break even  
change in imminent.

Do not get caught in a sieve  
created by the mind.  
Keep flowing,  
do not struggle  
let nature win.

## **In Love** (Part I)

In this ecstasy of Love  
you glow different  
each time I gaze at you.  
You are the same,  
and yet there is  
something different.

I am drunk without wine  
seriousness and fear have left  
all that defined me.  
I don't have anything  
to be proud about  
and yet there is something profound  
happening within me.  
A vibration moves me  
waves encircle me  
a warm song is born  
I am with you.

## **In Love** (Part II)

Let that selfless spark  
transform into a flame,  
burn their world of ignorance.  
Do not claim  
do not let them contain this flame.  
Become Love.  
Enter within  
do not remain.

In Love  
you will surrender  
you will not remain  
you will cease to reason  
you will drown in ecstasy.

Come find me there  
down the hills  
into the streams  
in that ocean.

## Lord Shiva

Come with me  
to the mountain where  
we can take refuge  
in the one who holds  
the Ganges over his head  
wears a snake  
as a garland for his neck.

We shall enter the forest  
where he rides the Nandi<sup>11</sup> to Kailash<sup>12</sup>  
Every now and then  
He transforms into a cosmic dance  
that moves the universe  
the Nataraja<sup>13</sup>.

He sips the Bhang<sup>14</sup>  
and breathes in ecstasy

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11. Nandi is the bull that Lord Shiva rides that also serves as his gatekeeper in Hindu mythology:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nandi\\_\(bull\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nandi_(bull))

12. Mount Kailash marks the abode of Lord Shiva in Hinduism:  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kailash>

13. Nataraja is the depiction of Lord Shiva as the cosmic dancer who destroys and transforms the universe:  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nataraja>

14. Bhang is the beverage drink of Lord Shiva that is prepared from the leaves and buds of the female Cannabis plant. It has been used to help with meditation. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhang>



He is Love and divine  
a child, a Lover, a mystic  
naive and kind  
and yet only he  
can discipline our mind.  
He moves everywhere  
and yet he is constant  
unchanging  
He is the spark  
that burns the seed of Life  
and the vibration  
that encompasses the nucleus of every atom  
He is the wisdom that can  
free us from our ignorance and ego  
He is the intelligence  
that gives us science and reasoning.

The artists express him in numerous ways  
and yet he never changes  
He is the one who ends the universe  
with a blink of an eye  
and creates another one  
with the beat of his drum.

You will find his abode  
when you drop the mind  
leave the ego and the mundane.

You will find him  
do not seek far.  
Enter the silence in yourself,  
and you will find him.

'Om Namah Shivaye'

## **Advaita Vedanta - Non-Duality**

I begin  
with a silence  
and in your presence  
I fully sink in my Being,  
I am lost in this ocean  
hard to distinguish  
between you and I  
there remains no duality.

And then I rise  
to the surface  
pregnant  
with knowledge  
I regain myself  
and approximate with words  
a description of that experience  
divine.

I am at a loss for words  
try to sing and dance  
write a poem, a song  
yet they can't contain  
as you are undefined.

I smile  
close my eyes  
and sink again  
in you.

## Lord Vishnu

There was a deep silence  
That silence was and is whole  
undisturbed  
That silence is Vishnu<sup>15</sup>

The drums of Shiva  
created the vibration  
that transformed the universe  
entangling with itself  
the hands of time and space.

That silence is still there.  
The universe is a wave  
in the ocean of silence.  
The ocean is Whole,  
unaffected by the transformation.

In the universe  
conscious living beings  
struggle and survive  
the human condition.  
Plants and animals  
are the mirror with which  
the silence experiences  
itself.

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15. Vishnu is the supreme God in Hinduism:  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vishnu>

That silence is within  
That silence is the Atman<sup>16</sup>  
the witness.  
You are just the mirror.  
Surrender,  
drop the mind,  
know your true nature  
and be free.

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16. Atman is a Sanskrit word that means 'Self'. In Vedanta philosophy of Hinduism, Atman is seen as the transcendental Self, Brahman or God: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%80tman\\_\(Hinduism\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%80tman_(Hinduism))

## **In You**

In love  
I enter the pond  
and soak  
in your personality.

We are lovers  
the barrier that  
held us  
has broken.  
Egoless,  
two streams  
pour into a pond,  
we find ourselves  
in each other  
two bodies  
one soul.

## **Organised Religion**

We have defined  
our own morality  
with our limited perception  
labelled it as religion.

We personified  
painted God  
made the gates  
of heaven  
and hell.

At times  
we sink into the colourful silence  
become free  
from this bondage  
of the mind and the body.

Most of the time  
we tremble  
in the noise  
from the mundane  
and drag ourselves  
in the human condition.



It's difficult  
for the butterfly to lift itself  
when the weight of the body  
pulls her down.

When I leave this town  
without the mind  
*You* and *I* are one.

## **Completeness**

The tides of joy  
rises to the shore  
sorrow falls back  
to the ocean  
the sand is dry and empty.

The extremes of  
joy and sorrow  
unveil a cycle  
a repetition  
as one leads  
the other follows  
over time  
and then a change.

Being aware  
I do not give myself fully to them  
I am a witness of these events  
they do not define who I am.  
They are visitors  
that stop by my house  
that rests on the foundation  
of peace and bliss  
I have nowhere to go  
nothing to achieve.

All is here  
within me.

## **Mundane Religion**

Religion is mundane  
with prayer that requires  
rituals and tradition  
sacrifice and culture.

Religion is spiritual  
with the silence of meditation  
that experiences the rainbow within  
there is peace.  
Kindness and compassion  
are the pearls  
that naturally glow  
in the dark.

## **Devoted**

When you seek refuge  
in that colourful silence within.

The boundaries of the ego will lessen  
and you will be lighter,  
the butterfly within  
will enable you to fly,  
fear will escape with the darkness  
in the rising sun,  
faith will guide you  
in the moonless night.

Patience will emerge  
from the heart,  
the mind will settle  
like waves after the storm  
and life will become a miracle.

## **Divine Love**

Walk with me  
on the road  
where the stream of emotions  
does not pollute this state  
where the heartbeats  
are free from the gravity  
of the electro-chemical activity  
in the brain  
where life is free  
from the everyday business  
of the mundane.

We are the hermits  
who dance in joy.  
We move with a celebration  
that is free  
from the weathers that govern life.

When the sun  
appears after the cold winter  
the frozen lake is bound to flow again.  
When the heart is in tune  
with the rhythm of God  
there is nothing else to gain.

I sit near you  
we gaze at each other  
and dissolve  
like two drops of ink  
into the ocean.  
Lost in the depth  
it becomes hard to distinguish  
me from you.  
We blend into each other  
and lose the intensity,  
lose the identity  
given by them.

## **The Bucket and the Well**

Although buckets  
of different colours  
shapes and size  
try to contain you,  
your source  
is from the same well.

Just as those buckets  
get identified in different ways  
you group yourselves  
into different race and religion.

You are not the bucket  
but all that it tries to hold.

Sooner or later  
you will break free  
from this bondage,  
from their classification  
the attachment of the mundane.

You will become identified  
as the bucket - no more  
and fulfil the thirst  
of the journey  
that finds itself.

You then become the well  
that fulfils its thirst  
by itself as a witness  
who is fully awake.

### **Winding To and Fro**

Allow me  
to wind back  
to those days  
when I saw the world  
naive like a child  
unaware of Earth's pain and suffering  
that can turn the television set  
from colourful  
to black and white.

We could fly  
in our thoughts  
like bees and butterflies.  
The days of youth  
flow like a stream  
only in one direction.  
Now there is no music  
left in that song  
that filled the void



in between the notes  
when the wind played  
and the coconut trees danced  
along with the flow of Rewa river.

We carry the weight  
on our backs  
from their conditioning.  
We are entangled in the gravity  
that keeps pulling us down.

There is some hope  
in the thought of liberation.  
With death to the body  
what will then happen  
to the mind  
entangled with this anguish  
of life?

## **Growing Old in Love**

Butterflies from the stomach  
have gone back to the garden,  
the desert of desires  
have been fulfilled with rain,  
the stream of possessiveness  
dissolves in the river of understanding.

Emotions do not dictate  
the voyage of the ship at sail  
the natural breeze of life  
keeps the sail in control,  
the excitement diminishes  
and yet there is longing  
for your company.

You still want to be together  
as you enjoy my presence.

The string that ties  
our cart together  
is the shared vision of life  
Love is the fuel  
we are the journey  
free like birds  
non-contained  
and undefined - as infinity.

## **Being at Home**

Desires rise me  
into the mundane  
Silence allow me  
to sink into the  
colourful wholeness.

I try to Be at home.

There is peace  
in this Wholeness  
the walls of the Ego  
do not separate  
You and I  
we are one  
undivided and undefined  
whole.

We are at home.

I try to rise again  
into the mundane  
and grab  
this Wholeness  
to undo my thirst  
when the sun is high  
in the desert

when I get lost in emotions  
and lose track  
to return home.

## **Time and Space**

I pondered  
about the beginning of the universe  
in terms of time and space.  
I concluded - without time  
there is no beginning or ending.  
My thoughts got entangled  
in that moment  
where I was making  
a logical construct  
of what was before time and the universe.

I thought of God and higher consciousness  
and once again I got entangled  
in the logical construct  
as consciousness has something  
to do with intelligence  
I was in the moment  
that had time and space  
peeled off  
from the system.

Intelligence was something  
I was using to remain there  
it was suffocating.

I meditated  
entered my Being  
with the vibration of 'Om'  
took a deep breath  
out of the thinking process  
for a moment.  
It's good to leave the gates  
of logic  
locked at times  
and experience this existence  
as it is - beyond time and space  
the unchanging reality  
Brahman<sup>17</sup>.

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17. Brahman is the ultimate unchanging reality that cannot be exactly defined in Hindu philosophy: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brahman>

## **Once Every Second**

A child cries  
a mother  
delivers a child  
a man dies  
another born  
the endangered  
are killed  
in the wild.

A tear drops  
a tear dries  
a child  
sold  
a widow  
cursed  
someone raped  
and stoned.

He finds love  
She finds wealth  
some journey begins  
some ends.

Food transforms  
into the blood  
and blood  
cooked as food  
a cycle  
of twists  
and turns.

## **Non-Clinging**

Spirituality  
is the medium  
that gives one the power  
to have a non-clinging nature  
where the gravity  
of theism  
atheism  
science and religion  
have little effect.

One just  
keeps on moving  
like the clouds  
in blue sky  
without any motive  
and becomes a witness  
of the consciousnesses  
that drives itself  
by itself.



## **The Circus of God**

This existence is a play, nature is the playground and God is the witness. God is the observer who rarely participates in the play. The witness is the seed of time and space and this existence has sprung out from that seed that has once been the infinite mass-less silence. The concept of God cannot be contained or comprehended by any logical representation in our minds which is limited by the sensory inputs.

Good and evil, joy and sorrow, loss and gain are the judgements by the mind based on knowledge and experience. What once was good, can later be considered evil, someone's sorrow is for someone's joy, a loss for the other can be a gain for another. Similarly, everything is interconnected in the web of time and space.

God does not mean goodness, but rather the non-judging witness that rests in the silence within. The judgement by the mind and the cause of any action in this material plane is bound by the law of Karma, hence no judgement by the witness is needed.

## **The Source of Love**

After the sun drowned  
into the ocean  
the moonlight gave this journey  
the direction it needed.

After you left  
the love remained  
it took another form  
with loss and regret.  
Later I regained myself  
knowing that the source  
of this loving  
was never in you  
it was always in me  
when the ego quietens down  
I become that lover again  
the source seeks love  
and finds itself.

## **A New Year**

Time  
is imaginary.

It comes - flows  
like the wind  
at times  
it blows like a cyclone  
at times  
still and crisp  
with the leaves.

Time is  
the guru of life.

We are  
slaves of time.

## **The Spark Within**

The path ahead is dark  
the lights from your closed ones  
have been guiding you.  
You relied on their spark  
you would tremble  
fall and derail  
when they disappear.

At first  
you may blame them  
for leaving your side  
then later realise  
if they had not left  
then you would have never found  
that spark within you.

It will brighten and show you  
the way for the journey ahead.  
You have come alone  
will go alone.

You are a spark.

You will only take the impressions  
of love that forms the ripples  
on your spirit to the other side.

## PART II: NOTES AND ESSAYS



## **Enlightenment**

We are merely following the crowd who are walking with closed eyes and using a stick for guidance. The crowd consists of artists, scientists, educators and our parents. We all have been told about the destination by someone, however, we fail to realise the power of knowledge from the stick that guides us. We have been talking about the rainbow and analysis of its colours but have not yet opened our eyes to have direct experience of it.

The destination is self realisation and the stick depicts the body of knowledge that is defined by scientific and religious books - from other people's experience - who may have also been walking with closed eyes. Enlightenment is when the travellers opens their eyes in the journey and define their own path. There is no need for the stick for those who have opened their eyes.

## **Direct experience**

Belief, faith and evidence are not needed when you have direct experience of the spark within. There will not be any need for any validation from others when you have become part of the fragrance. Once that miracle has touched you, all you would want to do will be to joyfully share that experience. This has been done for centuries through spiritual art, music and poetry. However, the problem has been that you have been trying to replicate that spark into yourself rather than experiencing your own spark. Do not just follow; stop, wait and experience the witness in you.

Direct experience of higher states of consciousness is not for everyone, it comes with patience and practise. It will need dedication and hard work and only those who have the inner search towards the experience towards higher states will understand. It is a blessing and not everyone will have this urge. It's not for everyone and certainly something that is difficult to prove or provide evidence for other to believe. There is no gain in making others believe as spirituality is a personal journey. Consciousness itself is hard for modern science to understand and higher states of consciousness is more difficult to describe as it links to the metaphysical.

## **Family**

There are two levels of relationship. One is that of physical level and the other is that of spiritual level. You will have some friends that relate to you very well and they become part of your family. Physically, our family is restricted to our parents and siblings, but spiritually they may not be part of our families. Relationships have their purposes. Our parents bring us to this world, some have the wisdom to take the journey further, while others do not know what they are doing and leave us aside. Our journey continues as we build our family psychologically and spiritually. It again has its purpose, at times to help us with our loneliness, at times to motivate us to strengthen our career, and at times to light the spiritual spark within us. Family is not limited to the physical, but is also extended to the psychological and spiritual level of relationship

## **Beauty**

Beauty is on two different levels which is the physical level and psychological level. The physical level of beauty is nourished with good diet, exercise and beauty treatments and has been made the centre of attention through media and fashion. The physical level of beauty is important for survival, however, it is not a reflection of the personality. Psychological level of beauty reflects on the behaviour of the person in terms of attitude towards life, kindness and compassion.

The psychological level of beauty is shown by the peaceful and compassionate nature of the person. It is also shown by the approach the person takes in solving everyday problems and how the person elevates their life and that of others around them. Psychological level of beauty is nourished through knowledge and experience with awareness; through the participation in spiritual, philosophical and scientific discussions and through meditation and selfless service.



## **Leadership**

In the absence of knowledge, the ego becomes ignorant and tries to create an impression in society to gain respect and nourish itself. The ego rises as a leader, although knowledge and wisdom are not present. The weak mind usually becomes ignorant of knowledge and seeks power to nourish the ego and enters politics to serve the people. A true leader is one who serves by controlling their 'dark forces' of fear and selfishness that cloud's the mind. A true leader takes refuge in the 'colourful silence' within that has the fragrance of love and compassion. Only those who have conquered themselves will have the power to lead and transform the world.

## **Capital punishment**

Capital punishment is a system through which the physical body is easily put to an end; however, nothing is done regarding the nature of the mind and consciousness. The end of the physical body is an easy way out, however, consciousness does not cease to exist just when the body ceases. Energy is neither created nor destroyed and consciousness is a subtle form of energy. It is important to go to the roots of the thought process by a proper rehabilitation process that needs much research. This can take place when the nature of man and the mind is fully understood.

## **Industry and academia**

'Industry' is the golden term in the academia of engineering and computing. It is common to find academics who lean towards this term and at times undermine it's essential and fundamental concepts in the field because they think that it is not used in the industry. The goal of academia is to share and contribute to the body of knowledge. It does not mean that an idea is not important if it is currently not used in the industry. Some of the theories of great mathematicians and scientists got recognised after their death. The current scientific research is valued and ranked through journals where the 'impact factor' <sup>18</sup>is calculated. At certain times, the brilliant scientific discoveries are undermined as they are not applied

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18. Impact Factor is a measure of the journal's ranking according its average paper citations: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impact\\_factor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impact_factor)

to the present, however, may be applicable in the future. The academia must seek and value knowledge regardless of their current application in the industry.

## **Development verses the quality of life**

There are two sides of the development process. One is economical and technological growth, the other is lifestyle and humanity. Economical and technological growth does not imply that lifestyle and humanity has become better. This is due to the reason that in a capitalist economical model, the elite five percent holds more than ninety-five percent of the wealth. So, in general, while the lifestyle of the elite may be better, the majority will be deprived of health, basic needs and educational resources. Capitalism is not the future of humanity. Many such capitalist systems are failing and there is a huge world-wide cry for a change in the economic and political system. One of the main reasons for the financial crisis is due to the elite who have been holding on to the resources while the poor have been struggling and even dying without food.

## **Spiritual component**

One can survive without awareness of the spiritual component in their being. Mundane truths can provide the basic components of live but not necessarily make the person fully alive. A bird can survive without the awareness of the power of its wings, but with awareness, the bird will be able to fly. The awareness of the spiritual component will unmask the true potential of the human being where science and logic will mark the component for the flight that is fuelled with spiritual awareness. Spiritual awareness is the door to the intuitive and imaginative part of our being that defines the ocean deep within from which we rise and fall as waves that paint the cycle of life and death.

## **Judgement and truth**

Your judgement of me is only a reflection of your perception that is dependent on your grasp of knowledge and experience that identifies maturity. In the case if you could only see in 'black and white', your judgement will overlook the red shirt that I am wearing. In the case it could not hear, the music I play will be worthless. This is why I do not let your perception of truth influence the path I have taken, as my goal is to seek the ultimate truth that is free from perceptions.

## **Mystic and philosopher**

There is a difference between a mystic and a philosopher. In general, a mystic aims to get higher states of consciousness to understand the purpose of life, while a philosopher looks for logical constructs to define its meaning. A mystic describes their experience with art, songs, music and poetry, while a philosopher employs theorems and analysis and reports them in academic papers. Theism and atheism are secondary and both do not need to take part in any of these ideals to walk in their path.

## **Education can sustain 'sharing and caring'**

Natural socialist and communist way of life is found in many tribes, including the tribes in Fiji and the South Pacific. This is due to the reason that it is a natural way of life to take care of others and share with those who have difficulty in obtaining due to limitations that are in terms of knowledge, health, time and condition.

Weak people and weak societies cannot share resources. Egoism is a product of a weak society that believes that an individual is disconnected from its surroundings and hence the accumulation of resources is for the individual. A spiritual and holistic society promotes the communal ego rather than an individual one. Socialism and communism cannot sustain themselves in the society of today as the capitalist

and egoist system has conditioned the mind to only think about itself. They have been poorly labelled as anti-democracy and dictatorship due to their poor implementation and failure in the past.

The tribes in the ancient world and those who are in remote locations survive with communal and social viewpoints as it is natural in their system of upbringing. The collective belief systems of these tribes generally treats nature as God and has deep respect for all living beings. Although they hunt, there are ceremonies and prayers that seek forgiveness for the killing. Children are brought up with lessons on how to share one's accumulated resources, usually, their hunt for the day. This is how tribes have survived and taken care of each other through communal upbringing.

## **God and consciousness**

The 'I' is just a shadow which disappears with the light of the wisdom from the colourful silence within. This spark of wisdom cannot be guaranteed with formal education. God reflects itself with knowledge and wisdom that makes you complete.

We think that we are a shadow of God and are unaware of our true nature and potential. We are part of the consciousness that is referred to as God and with awareness we can become the cosmic consciousness, can be described as nothingness and wholeness, zero and infinity, manifested and non-manifested, and thus simply undefined.

## **Love with life**

Love is a blessing from nature. In this blessing, you get the strength to lower your ego for the other and give more priority to the other than to yourself. You lower your shields of protection and allow yourself to be loved and you place all your energy to love. The other person may not feel the same as you and when your expectations do not get fulfilled, your heart gets hurt and you enter into that stage of loneliness and depression which is also a blessing that is needed to strengthen your soul. When you have overcome that stage and then if you feel that you have the ability to love again, then you are special.

If you feel that your love is not limited to a single person, but with all of life, then you have been blessed spiritually. You then are not a common lover, but have the light of the enlightened person who is free from the expectations and can love unconditionally. Wealthier than billionaires, you can always give even when there is nothing; a smile and a simple act of kindness without anything in return is the fragrance of Love. Flowers don't give that fragrance that surrounds your being. You are love.

## **Love and God**

The simplest and most universal definition of God is Love. Love is the source of strength, motivation and compassion. Love and devotion are expressions from the colourful silence that fuels life and sustains this existence.

Love is an expression of the 'colourful silence' which at times religions refer to as Truth. Love is the fragrance of God.

We can view love that we see as a flip-side of hate which is just part of the mental process. That expression of love is psychological and easily affected by 'gain' and 'loss'. When we define God as love, it does not necessarily refer to the love that is limited to mere relationships. Love is about losing oneself - one's ego - one's individuality in the ocean of consciousness, and that is why kindness and compassion are natural attributes of a lover. A lover is down to earth and yet profound.

## **Love**

A weak person will have difficulty to love or become spiritual as they both require one to give abundantly and selflessly without expectations. Love and religion comes from strength. If we unwrap ourselves from the layers of fear and limitations given by the society and its systems of conditioning, then one can become aware of the strength from deep within which is divine. That strength is without fear and our natural state with which we were born. Fear and limitation is mostly taught to us by the society, media, education and other conditioning systems as we are not born with them.

With the social conditioning, we have suppressed the divine strength that we were born with. We have not been accepted as we are and have been characterized into different nationalities, races and religions. Even our parents deny our natural state and push us to become someone, they make us follow some system of religion and at times we follow blindly. The society that includes our parents, makes us believe that if we get success in terms of career, we will be accepted by the society. We deny our true nature and lose our potential and talents and step in career paths that may not define our nature.

We analyse everything in a manner such that we lose the enjoyment of becoming part of an activity. We ask unnecessary questions when exposed to art and poetry. *What gain will we have from this?* What gain will we have from that? We do not realize that the act of doing is the fruit in itself and that is called a celebration that fulfils the thirst of the soul.

Love is beyond needs and wants. Lust, jealousy and possessiveness are the weaknesses that comes from denial of our true nature. The expression of love and compassion from weakness is temporary and can have harmful effects as it is not aware of the voice within. Love with spiritual strength where there is awareness of the light within naturally enlightens the being with compassion and kindness. Love with weakness shows possessiveness and selfishness. True religion is in kindness and compassion.

## Science, God and religion

Evidence is a poor shield for standing up against religion/spirituality. The term 'God' must be defined as different religions define this phenomena in different ways. In Dharmic religions<sup>19</sup>, God is defined as life and the universe. Moreover, Jainism and Buddhism are atheistic religions.

There are several theories in science for which there exists no real evidence and that require faith. The string theory, the size of the universe, dark energy, dark matter, and so on are some of the examples. Science can explain the transformation of physical life in terms of evolution, however, it has not been yet able to explain the origin of life or the universe. What was there before time and before the Big Bang?

In Dharmic religions, these concepts are explained in the Upanishads and Vedas with the medium of poetry that appeals to a spiritual element within us. Moreover, even Abrahamic religions have used poetry to describe metaphysical events. Religious fanatics take myths and legends in poetry literally and argue for their existence.

The subject of God/religions can be discussed in the schools of philosophy and within the academic field of comparative religion. Some religions are based on philosophy and do not seek blind faith for support, but rather on experience that leads to a positive transformation within the individual. It does not matter whether one believes in creationism, the big bang theory, parallel universe or evolutionary theory; what matters most is what one does with those beliefs.

'Being born again' is symbolic for being awakened. One cannot be born again or become awakened with mere religious ritual such as baptism. There needs to be a transformation. King Ashoka<sup>20</sup> who took over most of the Indian subcontinent with war and violence, all of a sudden, became a Buddhist monk and preached about non-violence and compassion. This is an example of transformation where one is born again in the same body but with a different mindset.

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19. Refers to religions that emerged from India that include Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and Buddhism.

20. Ashoka: Indian emperor of the Maurya Dynasty who ruled almost all of the Indian subcontinent from 269 BCE to 232 BCE.

Religion and politics have been inseparable throughout human history. A common weakness is the desire to rule the world when one cannot even take control of their mind and its selfish desires.

A major threat and weakness of humanity lies in politically motivated religions that discourage one from questioning their faith and investigating their belief systems. Instead, members are encouraged to spread their love of a predefined God and belief system and blindly save humanity, although their actions hurt others. The heart, mind and spirit must be in tune and relying on logic alone will ignore the beat of the heart and the warmth of the soul.

## **Violence and entertainment**

A large portion of children are exposed to violence when they are growing up with family violence and through entertainment such as games and movies. We should question the gain in allowing our children to play violent games and watch violent movies. There is nothing that kids gain; actually they lose in terms of time and money. If these games are replaced by educational games that help children in thinking, problem solving, humane values and creative thinking, then it will help in their education and life.

Human beings in general are in a very fragile state at the moment. We are torn between science and religion that has been influenced by politics. There is a lot of rage in people and violent games, pornography and videos certainly incite people. Why should the world take risks and entertain itself with such forms of violence and cruelty? We can understand that some level of violence in videos and games is acceptable which may also train the mind and body for self defence when it is needed. The theme of the game is important and violence in sporting games such as boxing and wrestling games is understandable. The same applies to movies and television.

Proper censorship of abusive music, games and videos can have good effects on students and their behaviour. Freedom has responsibility and, just as we like to drink clean water, it is important to censor the forms of entertainment and make them more educational. Entertainment can become educational. Instead of giving importance to celebrities such



as actors and entertainers, the media can give importance to scientists, engineers, doctors, writers and social workers who contribute to the community. Education needs to be entertaining and 'cool' - something that is fun to participate. Music, art and literature are very important for society and their forms can define the flux of society in terms of peace and prosperity.

## **Art and science**

Evidence is needed for science where the search is about the physical nature of reality. In literature, philosophy, spirituality and humanism, no evidence is needed as the search is to improve one's life and seek higher levels of consciousness.

Art is not based on evidence, but on experience. Art does not confine itself to logic, it is an expression of feelings. Literature is a form of art from which meaning is extracted that forms the basis of certain forms of philosophy. Religious and spiritual books are expressed using poetry from which we get themes and messages on morality. Art does not work with hypothesis and does not need evidence and, hence, art is separate from science. Although there can be some overlaps, their goals are different.

Artists try to express reality through their intuitive understanding - they work on a creative future or, with verse and colours, try to express the meaning of life. Scientists try to logically express it with investigation and evidence and engineers use logic to develop solutions for certain problems. Some of the greatest engineering achievements of today come from the creative works of artists who lived few hundred years ago. Howsoever, the spirituality of today will become the science of the future when, with better technology and theories, scientists will be able to paint a better picture and holistic viewpoint of life.

## **Artificial Intelligence and Consciousness**

Consciousness cannot be modelled by logic alone. Artificial Intelligence is in the embryo stage as consciousness is not fully understood and cannot be defined by neuroscientists and psychologists. Therefore, it will be difficult to simulate it.

We may be able to better understand about the nature of human consciousness when we take steps to computationally model it, and in the process, we can build applications that improve humanity. We need more scientific and theoretical foundations about the nature of consciousness to replicate it computationally.

What we refer to as the intuitive side of the brain may not be the property of the brain. A musical instrument is used to generate music. The musical instrument is not music itself. The brain is not consciousness, but a medium that is used to express it in the physical dimension.

## **Spirituality and knowledge**

It is easy to be religious as there are established sets of traditions and belief systems that one has to follow. It is easier to be a follower than a leader. It is difficult to be spiritual as one has to investigate, question and experience the natural of reality from a different perspective. The hardest part is when one has to challenge their belief system and psychological constructs given by the society. Spirituality is not about belief or disbelief in God, it is beyond belief systems.

Meditation is central to spirituality. Meditation is prayer that is free from words and thoughts that express needs and wants and there is complete silence. It is prayer where the mind and the thought processes are settled and one is in the centre of their being.

It is common for those walking the spiritual path to suffer, become depressed and alienated as society will see the seeker as an outsider or the one who has 'lost' their mind. Sorrow and depression are natural in the beginning of the spiritual path as the seeker will have a complete transformation of their being.

Wisdom comes with realisation of knowledge. It comes with experience that has awareness. Philosophy, literature,

spirituality and science are all part of the body of knowledge. With knowledge of science, one can determine if the water from the pond is clean enough to drink. With literature, one can describe the beauty of the water and the pond in poetic language constraints. With spirituality, one will share the water with others and with philosophy, one will question what will happen if water is not there and the implications of its absence.

Wisdom comes from experience and the study of spiritual and philosophical texts is part of the journey that contributes to the experience. One can survive even without any interest in spirituality/philosophy, however, life may not be that joyful as one will easily be carried away, make emotional decisions and engage in activities by trial and error. The study of spirituality and philosophy, science, literature and religion transforms one's life. If someone is born with that knowledge, then they are blessed.

If one burns all the world literature and philosophy, the new generation of man will go back to the days of the caveman. Religion is part of literature and philosophy. Science is part of philosophy. Love flowers from within and faith is the fragrance of the flower of Love. Faith does not imply theism or atheism, but rather a deep trust that unites the external world with that of our inner being.

### **The connection between art, science and spirituality**

Most atheism arguments are based on the definition of God and the hardest part is to define all that cannot be defined. Religious books have been trying hard and failed, as words and logic cannot contain this phenomenon. The language of art and poetry is not based on logic and hence is the only way forward, but then it won't be a definition. Art and poetry can only give analogies for being one with the experience that we refer to as God.

Science has a logical system of explaining concepts that deal with the nature of reality. Spirituality expresses the explanations with art and poetry that enables people to have an intuitive understanding of what cannot be explained by logic alone.

Modern day spirituality is concerned with consciousnesses, humanism, morality, love and compassion. It uses scientific knowledge to update its knowledge base. Both theists and atheists can be spiritual. Science is concerned about the study of matter and technology uses that knowledge to create solutions to problems. Technology can be misused to create bigger problems such as nuclear warfare. Spirituality is concerned about morality and science is concerned about evidence and explanations on the physical universe. The foundation of spirituality is in morality and it extends to higher levels that involve transcendental experiences.

Spirituality traditions, for thousands of years, have asked questions about our being and the manifestation of the universe. The concept of a parallel universe is in Hindu Vedic texts that are more than four millennia old and sung and passed orally for thousands of years before being written down. 'Energy can neither be created nor destroyed. There is no creation-only transformation'. These concepts form the beginning of the Isha Upanishads that is a central text in Hinduism. It is with this spiritual tradition that the concepts of infinity and zero were born. They represent nothingness and wholeness and deal with meditative states of our being.

The Taoist spiritual text Tao Te Ching<sup>21</sup> contains hymns about the creation of the universe. God is not a personality, but rather a state of consciousness, as these texts describe God as manifested, non-manifested, with and without qualities, unbounded by time and space.

Science and spirituality ask the same questions, but express the answers in different ways.

Science can answer the questions about the physical nature of the universe. The meta-physical can be answered with philosophy. Science studies the world of matter and spirituality focuses on the world consciousness. The study of the world of matter is easier than consciousness as one has difficulty obtaining evidence in the latter case.

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21. Tao Te Ching is the central text of Taoism.

## Devotion is the highest peak of love

Yoga simply means integration or union with the whole or divine and in this union one becomes selfless and free from the ego and limitations of the mind.

Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi<sup>22</sup> says that the simplest way towards self-realisation is to be free from ignorance in order to hear the voice within. According to his philosophy, the question "who am I" can form the basis of spiritual awareness.

The three main paths to self-realisation according to the Bhagavad Gita are Gyan Yoga (knowledge and wisdom), Bhakti Yoga (devotion) and Karma Yoga (action).

Amma<sup>23</sup> says that the three paths are the wings and tail of the same bird and without one the bird cannot fly. Osho<sup>24</sup> viewed devotion as the highest peak of love.

Love constrained to mere romantic relationships is easily mixed with lust and possessiveness.

Love is the heightened state of consciousness. In this state, the being is selfless and free from selfish desires. In this state, the self identity transforms and one sees the others and their problems as their own. With love, there is union and integration that is called yoga<sup>25</sup>.

Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita states that karma is the main path towards self-realisation. However, he also states that without knowledge and devotion, karma yoga is not possible as, with the absence of knowledge and wisdom, the person won't be able to understand and distinguish the difference between right and wrong that are subject to time, place and situation. Lord Krishna in the Gita mentions that

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22. Enlightened Indian philosopher and guru: 1879-1950.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramana\\_Maharshi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramana_Maharshi)

23. Hindu spiritual leader known as 'hugging saint' who has been active in humanitarian activities worldwide:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mata\\_Amritanandamayi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mata_Amritanandamayi)

24. Osho also known as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh was a Hindu philosopher and mystic who gained international recognition of his teachings that was also considered controversial mainly due to his criticism of institutional religions: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osho>

25. Yoga is the spiritual discipline that forms one of the six schools of theistic Hindu Philosophy: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yoga>

'only the canoe of knowledge can make one cross the ocean of suffering'. There is suffering all around us and only with knowledge and wisdom, can we get through life without being controlled by external circumstances.

People become inclined towards spirituality at some stage of their lives. However, spirituality has become a subjective term for different religions, cultures and regions.

The science of spirituality is the path through which one becomes their true nature and understands the meaning of life. The path begins with science and logic and then turns towards the path of intuition and mysticism that is a component of self-realisation and awareness.

A spiritual person is positively transformed and has the heightened awareness to bring in a positive change in any environment. Blind faith in religious institutions, such as the temple, and following traditions and rituals that have lost their meaning or significance does not enforce spirituality. Recital of Hindu mantras without understanding their meaning and the significance of recitation cannot enforce a positive transformation within.

It is common to find people who are confused with rituals, traditions and customs. Some people believe that fulfilling rituals would please God and so the practices should not be questioned. These are common in the path of devotion.

Devotion is cultivation of love. It is impossible for someone to despise the world around them and also love God. The Vedanta<sup>26</sup> philosophy given by the Upanishads<sup>27</sup> indicates that 'the creator and the creation are the same'; that implies that the presence of God is in life. Devotion is experienced with the view that God is in every living being and to be devoted means to love oneself and the other in the same manner. With true devotion, one can engage in karma yoga or selfless action.

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26. Vedanta is philosophy that comes from the Vedas which is the core text of Hinduism. Vedanta is known as the conclusion or the end of the Vedas and form the main philosophy in Hinduism: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vedanta>

27. Upanishads are a collection of Hindu texts that form the philosophy of Vedanta: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upanishads>

Everyone has the freedom to walk in the path towards self-realisation. In Hindu Philosophy, hell and heaven are states of the mind. Samadhi and Nirvana are not a world away from us, but something that can be attained here on Earth.

## **The Bhagavad Gita: Motivation, Service and Sacrifice**

Selfless service gives the greatest form of inner joy. This is why the Bhagavad Gita<sup>28</sup> defines selfless service as the highest form of prayer and devotion. Selfless service is free from reward and, by itself, the service is the reward as it brings inner joy.

Every human action in the universe has some hidden or known purpose and needs some motivation. In order to implement the philosophy of selfless action (Karma Yoga<sup>29</sup>), some form of motivation is needed which depends on the level of understanding of the seeker. The motivation can be in terms of the end goal of life – that is liberation (Nirvana<sup>30</sup> or Moksha<sup>31</sup>). The motivation can also be a divinely blessed and peaceful lifestyle or material wealth, respect and recognition from the community. When the level of consciousness rises, the form of motivation changes. A time comes when motivation is not needed as the seeker walks further into the journey. Only the enlightened person can engage in selfless action without any motivation as enlightenment is motivation by itself.

One can do more harm than good when the philosophy of selfless action (Karma Yoga) is practised from the mind and not from the heart. If there is no joy in helping others selflessly, then one should not force themselves. Karma Yoga is the highest form of devotion, a true prayer from within. Those who only pray or engage in Karma Yoga for an end goal suffer due to disappointment when the fruit of action has not

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28. Bhagavad Gita: the core or main religious text of Hinduism

29. Philosophy of selfless action.

30. Nirvana: Highest state of consciousness where there is freedom from suffering

31. Samadhi: Enlightenment and freedom from the cycle of births and deaths. Death to the subtle body.

been given. The joy that one experiences in selfless action is itself the fruit.

Beggars can't be those who can easily donate; in the ideal case, they would have to steal or beg for more in order to donate. Those who can help others selflessly need immense spiritual strength. If the strength is not sufficient and if someone is forcing themselves to sacrifice and help others, there can be more harm done than good in the process. This also applies to fasting on spiritual occasions. Fasting is difficult for the body and if one tries to fast and meditate at the same time, then the body is not at rest as the mind and body will desire food. In this way, the idea of sacrifice is actually harmful to the body and the mind and can affect the path of the spiritual seeker. Moreover, the form of sacrifice where one suppresses their sexual activities can be very harmful as suppression can lead to perversion. Sacrifice without awareness can have negative effects in the spiritual path.

The goal of the journey guided by the Bhagavad Gita is to overcome the ego and the conditioning of society and regain one's true nature. The concept of 'sacrifice' in the Gita on the other hand, can give strength to the ego. Even renunciation of material possession and the life of the ascetic can give more power to the ego. This is why the Gita shows the path where one engages in selfless action without recognition. Recognition is a need from the ego that fails to see the strength within. A lover is ego-less. An ascetic who has realised their true self will become ego-less and behave like a lover who is in love, not with one person but, rather, with all of life and this existence.



## **The core of Hinduism**

Hinduism is not an organised religion. It is a spiritual and philosophical system that has absorbed several pagan traditions and rituals into its path. The Hindu perspective of Dharma and Karma embedded with non-violence actually takes into account several belief systems and then steers different systems into the oneness of God.

In Hinduism, God is represented in numerous ways; however, God is one, without a name, identity or features that can be comprehended by the limited human mind. The philosophy of Dharma does not make one judge people and alter their lifestyles and cultural system.

Dharma is a universal view of life that coexists in harmony with nature, the ecosystems and all living beings. Hindu monks in ancient India propagated Hindu spiritual values without converting people of different nations and cultures. Rather, they integrated the different cultures and traditions with the Hindu philosophy of Karma and Dharma. The wise monks have not made foreign cultures lose their identity but embedded these Dharmic values into them. This is why Zen and other forms of Buddhism have undergone a different transformation in terms of culture and practices in China, Korea and Japan without losing its spiritual depth.

Buddhism and Jainism are based on the philosophy of karma and Dharma and are often called Dharmic religions. They are based on the core philosophy of the Vedas and are also at times called Vedic religions.

The Vedas, Gita and Upanishads are mere approximations of the truth that lies within. They give us directions to fully sink into that silence and experience the Brahman – God.

## **Vegetarianism and Hinduism**

One major characteristic of a human being in comparison with other animals is discipline and control. Discipline distinguishes the human being from other animals. Discipline comes from knowledge and wisdom.

Is it moral to kill animals of lesser intelligence for meat? We can rule out of the killing of insects and other microscopic organisms in unawareness as its part of nature and beyond our control. There are those who believe that humans are the most intelligent ones and therefore, they have the right to kill those of lesser intelligence.

It is easy to search for scientific benefits of health in a vegetarian diet. In general, vegetarians who have a spiritual motivation have deep respect for nature and see fellow animals as sentient beings that are on the same level as humans. There have not been major health risks in terms of nutrient deficiencies in the societies that have been vegan for thousands of years such as the Jain, Hindu and Buddhist societies.

Does eating vegetable also mean that we are killing them? Eating of fruits does not necessarily mean that we are killing the tree. Fruits are naturally made so that animals eat them and disperse the seeds. Plants have different characteristics when compared to animals. Plants grow with minerals from manure and humus that includes animal decompositions and animal wastes.

There is a 'give and take' natural cycle between plants and animals. There are root crops which don't really die such as potatoes when you take them off. You can eat part of it and plant them. This killing is not the same as killing of a cow or a sheep where you witness suffocation and pain.

Does Hindu philosophy restrict eating of animals? The central theme of the Hindu-philosophy is Dharma that translates to duty, ethics and truthful living which implies non-violence. Killing with awareness is violence. In the Vedic period, during the Mahabharata, there were people who were meat eaters, however, that does not justify that eating meat is good just because it has been done historically in the Hindu society. The practices of the society are not necessarily the core philosophy of the religion. One can claim themselves as a

Hindu and engage into violence with awareness and that does not mean the Hindu philosophy has changed.

Hinduism is a philosophical system and a way of life, not an organised religion where there is a fixed set of rules from a single prophet or source and driven with conversion properties. The core Hindu texts such as the Upanishads and the Gita do not strictly enforce but encourage one to be non-violent and therefore, promote respect for all sentient beings in a natural manner.

The Bhagavad Gita describes the characteristics of an enlightened person who has control over his mind and reached the realm of higher consciousness. The Gita outlines that all life including plants and animals are equal.

All animals are equal and whether one is killing a chicken or cow it is the same thing in Hindu philosophy. The cow is highly respected in the Hindu culture as it is considered as the mother similar to children being raised with their mother's milk. This is the main reason behind devotional aspect towards the cow. There are a number of animals that Hindus see from a devotional perspective that implies God can be manifested in any form, either as a human being or an animal and that all sentient beings are equal.

We cannot rule out the dependency of our diet given weather and the location. This is why the Upanishads and the Gita did not fully enforce vegetarianism. How can one survive with vegetables in extreme cold weather or in places with water shortages such as the deserts? Moreover, the growth of certain plants and vegetables are dependent on the weather pattern. Survival is important and at times even with the spiritual perspective, one has to kill for survival but that killing should be with spiritual awareness.

There are some of us who can leave meat and become vegetarians and for some, it will take years. Some eat meat for health reasons as their body lack some nutrients, proteins and minerals. However, we can raise a violent-free future of vegans who have more respect for fellow sentient beings. We should raise the future generation in a disciplined way that have the features to be called a human society. If future children are vegetarians from birth then they will have less difficulty in transforming to a vegan diet. It is difficult for non-vegetarians to become vegetarians and the same is for the vegetarians as they have difficulty in eating meat. If

everyone in the society is vegetarian, then killing of animals and eating them would sound as revolting as cannibalism today. In that society, the meaning of cannibalism would be revised and eating of other animals without justification would be considered cannibalism.

## **Rama and Krishna in Hinduism**

The Ramayan<sup>32</sup> written by Hindu sage Valmiki is one of the greatest epics in Indian literature that forms the main text of devotional movements in Hinduism. The text has important themes about discipline, morality and the triumph of truth over evil. The protagonist, Rama takes exile for 14 years to the forest with his wife Sita and brother Lakshman in order to fulfil an oath of his father. In the forest, Rama moves from place to place spreading the light of Dharma and protecting the sages and Ashrams which are institutions that promote education and spirituality. Ravan is the antagonist who plans and takes Sita with him by force to Lanka when Lord Rama and Lakshman are in the forest. He keeps Sita at his palace garden for several months while Rama gathers an army to fight a war in order to defeat the evils of Ravana and get his wife back and return to his city.

Rama was aware that Ravana may have taken advantage of Sita as she was forced to stay with him for more than six months. Due to the love for his wife, Lord Rama risked his life, the lives of his brothers and the lives of the entire Vanara army to go to war with Ravana. Rama took these risks for nothing because at the end, he had to send Sita to the forest on the basis of some people talking bad about her. The truth does not change; either people talk good or bad about someone. The actions of Rama had cost the Indian society a lot in terms of equality and respect for women. If Rama gave Sita the same respect and kept her as the queen, the status of women in Indian society would have been higher today.

Rama could have gone to forest to kill Ravan with the motivation for protecting the sages and also for safeguarding the rights of spiritual seekers. There were several reasons why anyone could have gone to war with Ravan. Rama took the safety risk of Sita while being in the forest merely for the

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32. Ramayan: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramayana>

motivation and reason to declare war on Ravan. There are several important lessons in the Ramayan, and like any piece of literature one must not blindly accept the actions of Rama, but reason with them and how they can be used to improve today's society. The rights of women is prime and there is no justification for the wrong decisions undertaken by Rama especially when sending Sita to the forest in her pregnant state. Even as incarnation of God, Rama suffered in the end as Sita was taken away by goddess of earth (Dharti Maata) (according to the Ramayan). During this phase, Rama could not control his anger and Shiva and Brahma had to request him to calm down. This depicts Rama's weakness and for this reason, he had to be reincarnated as Krishna with more knowledge.

The beauty of Krishna is that he was not in the extreme, but looked at life from a balanced point of view that is called the middle path in Buddhism. Krishna was a scholar of Vedanta. His actions during the war showed it is ethical to break the rules to allow victory of truth at times. Krishna was not like Rama who would follow his father's directives blindly and risk his family in forest for fourteen years. Rama did not understand that the rights of women come first and he left Sita in the forest who was pregnant and in need of him. Krishna was a mystic and a philosopher and he questioned everything on the basis of truth and justice.

## **On Destiny**

The concept of infinity is difficult to imagine with our mind, however, it is the main attribute of the universe in terms of time and dimension.

Life evolved in an organised intelligent way. On earth, over millions of years, microscopic organisms transformed into the macroscopic level. Life moved from water to land. The evolutionary transformation was highly influenced by natural resources such as food, water and weather. Life had an intelligent way of adaptation to its environment.

It is hard to ignore that there is no spiritual significance in the creation of life and the universe.

Some people believe in the interpretation of God as the judgemental body who is out there in the clouds and planning our steps and therefore, it is easy to relate to our future as destiny where the future is planned. Some people believe that our current state of suffering has no reason but a plan of God. We are suffering because it is written and our future can be predicted.

There may have been few enlightened sages and seers in the course of history who can see the future based on our present activities, mindset and the choices. However, if we make an abrupt and arbitrary choice that is not in line with the past events, even the future predicted by the enlightened sage would become different and the prediction would be inaccurate.

We create a reality of our own with our mindset and our thoughts. Everything that we have thought of and are thinking now makes a difference in our reality that projects our immediate future. We are and become all that we believe in. Patients remain in hospitals when doctors inform them that there is no hope. It is not the disease that keeps the patient's in the hospitals but it is their reality as they are made to believe that there is no hope.

God is omnipotent and omnipresent. God is nothing, God is everything, with and without form. Why would the creator of the universe plan everything? If our future was already designed, God would be bored in a pre-planned future.

The creator and his creation are the same. We are part of the creation and the creators who further expand the creation with the reality that we create. If there is news of pain, suffering and violence in the media, then that reality unfolds itself over and over again. The media influences our reality to a significant level with the news broadcast to gain popularity and sell their advertisements.

The truth that of creator and creation is the same has been known by sages and seers of ancient India and expressed in Advaita Vedanta <sup>33</sup>philosophy where the self or Atman (Self or Soul) and Brahman (God) are the same. With meditation, one

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33. Advaita Vedanta philosophical school of Hinduism that unifies the teachings of the Upanishads and where Atman (Self) and Brahman (God) are viewed as part of the same entity:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advaita\\_Vedanta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advaita_Vedanta)

experiences the integration of the Self and the Brahman. This is why, in Indian culture, enlightened Yogis and mystics are highly respected. Everyone has the freedom to be one with God, and become God-like during that union.

The philosophy of Karma has highly been misunderstood in the west as Karma does not mean destiny, judgement, regret or suffering. Karma simply means action. Karma is the natural law of the universe which reminds us to be aware and responsible of our actions. The universe responds to us with the actions of our past, however, it does not mean that the future is fully pre-determined. Our actions (karma) can affect the way the future unfolds. Our actions can make life and its struggle easier or even harder depending on its nature, i.e. the type of action. If our actions involve in expanding one's horizon of knowledge, then these actions can help one to better combat the struggles of everyday life.

If we build our reality without past actions that have regret and are painful, then certainly we will suffer. We are individuals, who are part of the greater whole, and have the ability to influence the future with our thoughts and beliefs. We must be aware of our actions, our thoughts and beliefs in order to live a joyful life.

We can't leave everything to God. The God that we have been looking for outwardly has always been within us.

## **Poverty**

Poverty can be characterised at different levels. On a physical level, the poor are those who do not have enough to eat and the means to protect themselves. On a psychological level, poverty is defined by the inability for people to open up to new ideas, grow in terms of knowledge and those who are deprived of spiritual knowledge of their well being. A sannyasi <sup>34</sup> may seem poor on a physical level, however on a psychological level; a sannyasi is richer than a billionaire who will be restless about protecting the assets. To be complete and at peace is what defines being above the poverty level on psychological/spiritual level. Spirituality is a deep system of psychology.

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34. Ascetic who has renounced all material possessions and becomes deeply committed to spirituality.

## Sex and spirituality

It is through sex that nature sustains itself. Sex is the energy that creates the environment from which emerges life. Sex is the seed from which sprouts the bud of life. Sex is not a mere need of the body for pleasure, but rather a life giving force. This energy can be used for a positive transformation if one learns to appreciate its significance and not abuse it. Suppressed and perverted sex is a sin, otherwise it is the force that sustains life.

Only when the needs of the body are fulfilled, then one can focus on the needs of the soul. If one deprives the body of food and suppresses sexual activity, then there can be serious problems.

There is a difference between having sex and making love. Sex is based on bodily instinctive desires and fulfils a thirst of our animal nature. Making love is a spiritual communion of two energies.

We should not let any spiritual motivations divide our being-our body is driven with deep sexual forces. It is common to find spiritual people practice chastity and tend to ignore their sexual needs. When ignored, there grows a division and a certain aspect of the consciousness that will be suppressed which sometimes can reveal itself with violence.

Chastity is important for the spiritual journey, however, it can become dangerous. Chastity must be practised when there is deep understanding and when sexual desires are fulfilled. Sexuality can be used as a means for spirituality, hence, there is the Tantra <sup>35</sup>philosophy in Dharmic religions that views love making as a form of meditation. Everything must be done in balance and chastity is the extreme.

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35. Tantra philosophy in Dharmic religions refers to devotional elements through a number of practices that also include worship of deities, meditation and sexual rites.



## **Nature of violence : Suppression, pornography and human sexuality**

Violence is on different levels, mainly psychological and physical level. An example of psychological level of violence is emotional blackmail. Possessiveness becomes a form of violence at the psychological level. Physical level of violence emerges from psychological level. The "manly and macho" behaviour of males actually emerges from weakness imposed from religious and social conditioning where men take control over women. One cannot blame and associate violence with gender (sex) as gender is only a physical attribute of the body. The mind is gender-less and its behaviour is dependent on how the society nurtures it.

In some cases, the person who is physically violent may actually be the person who would have been psychologically tortured and given up on the purpose to live - as similar to the case of someone who has a cheating husband or wife. So the physical level of violence can be of less torture than psychologically level at times. However, that does not justify violence at any level.

It was not long ago that women were not covering their chests. Men were only covering the lower half of the body. This was seen in native tribes in Fiji before the British and similarly this was also common in the African and ancient Indian tribes. Children were brought up that way and it was a natural way of life. These cultures were not sexually suppressed. The culture which makes women cover themselves more get more sexually suppressed. In the past, there were no pornographic mediums and currently there is a huge risk as technology has been used to broadcast abusive pornography that infects the minds which seeks pleasure in violence. We are in a difficult phase of the evolutionary process. In future, dressing styles will change, however, there are bigger challenges ahead that will determine the most appropriate Internet censorship and self defence tactics needed to prevent rape and other types of violence.

Internet pornography is tens of billions of dollars industry. In some way, it ensures safe sex as there is no physical contact in the age of sexually transmitted diseases. However, violent and child pornography is becoming popular due to demand by the society hidden in the veil. Religion has been used to suppress the society sexually. On some level, marriage also adds to the suppression as man is monogamous and at the

same time a polygamous animal by nature and sub-consciously seeks different partners for diversity in the population. Due to this suppression, there is perversion and the demand for sick pornography is increasing later causing violent and inhumane acts such as rape and related offences. The human mind and its sexual desires in relation to violence need to be studied extensively and in intense detail in order to build a better society for the future.

### **A pseudo-scientific view of death**

Death of the physical body does not mean that consciousnesses (information and software or subtle body) disappears. Energy is neither created nor destroyed and consciousness is a form of energy. There are different 'dimensions' in which our subtle body moves after death of the physical body. At times - it gets in the 'limbo' state trying to find its way as emotions and attachments entangles the subtle body. This is common for untimely and unexpected deaths. Some religions have referred to these higher dimensions as 'heaven' and 'hell'. Dharmic religions have the concept of Samadhi that refers to the death of the subtle body - this happens to the enlightened being.

### **The case of marriage**

The traditional aspect of marriage is the establishment of a link between two families. Marriage is not just about uniting the couple, but uniting families. The main reason of marriage is procreation and the system with family support enables the couple to raise children. A legal document or a ritual is used to unite the couple. 'Live-in' relationships are easier, however, it will be difficult to raise children as there will be less moral/social obligation.

In some cases, even if someone who is not in love, will try to remain married for their children's well being. Marriage can be a sacrifice for the continuity of our species. Nothing can guarantee love and attraction to remain forever. Nature is all about change; seeds grow into a plant, if you go on looking for the same seed in the plant, you will not be happy.

Moreover, marriage is about friendship and companionship. It is also an investment, where both husband and wife work hard to meet the goals in life and share their work.

The problem is that people suppress themselves in marriage and expect everything from each other. If either of the partners get bored and there is sexual attraction outside of marriage then this leads to serious consequences given the implications and effects on children due to possible violence in the family. If there is suppression or dominance, then arguments will emerge and lead to problems.

There is a greater problem, if a partner in a married relationship suppresses the attraction for another person and stays married for the excuse of raising the child. This will lead to problems in the family that could contribute to violence. While responsibility is there, 'freedom' must be the foundation of marriage and responsibility alone cannot be used as a motivation to remain married. Love is in freedom and relationships that are void of love cannot last long.

Maturity is overcoming the body and becoming free from lust and desires that can ruin one's life and marriage. Spirituality is about being the master of one's mind, one's body and life. With spirituality, the canoe of marriage can cross the ocean that has waves of a storm.

## **System of governance**

Different system of governance (capitalism, socialism or communism) is needed at different points of time depending on the collective nature of consciousnesses of the society in terms of education and knowledge. Democracy and transparency, human rights, protection of nature are some of the essentials that should always be maintained regardless of the system of governance.

Capitalism is a system of governance that has enforced selfishness in disguise. We need a system of governance that lowers the gap between the rich and the poor and promotes a caste-less society that enables a holistic way of living. Currently, the world is generally in a capitalism mode with the

consumer culture that has become advanced in terms of technology, however, it is behind in terms of humanity and quality of lifestyle. A balanced system is needed where everyone should be paid not for their name and position or career, but rather for their contribution in those positions.

Capitalism has enforced a consumer culture where the rich spend for things that they actually do not need while in some parts of the world, people are dying due to hunger and malnutrition.

It is sad to hear remarks from some very educated people that people are poor because they are lazy, not because they are

not given better opportunities and education or training. In African and Indian subcontinents, a massive population has remained poor due to corruption and poor education reforms that have been taken advantage by the 'wealthy wolfs' who prey on the sheep and have been growing their belly's, who came into power either recently or have been there for centuries.

Capitalism motivated by the economy from the consumer culture works with extremes. It brainwashes the masses to desire for the luxuries of life and makes the society feel incomplete without it. This brainwashing is done through the media, television, movies and the radio where brand-names and unhealthy junk foods, drinks and cosmetics are promoted. In a large population, where there is a large income gap between the upper and the lower classes, both groups suffer. The rich suffer due to the brainwashing from the consumer culture as they spend more to chase happiness in the materials and the poor suffer as they do not have enough food on their table or afford basic education for their children.

Democracy does not mean that people have the choice to do anything they wish. Freedom comes with lots of responsibly and the world is not in that mature state to have complete freedom.

## Leadership and Work

We have a lot of leadership problems in the world due to the false notion that anyone can be a leader. Only those who have the ability and the nature to lead should enter politics; likewise, according to their nature, they can be a scientist, accountant and engineer. If the nature of the person is of a scientist, engineer and accountant and due to the incentives of salary and benefits, these experts wish to lead, then there can be problems if the features of a leader are not present in them. The nature of the work should be the incentive to take any leadership position rather than the pay scale.

The capitalist society for centuries has imposed the system of hierarchy that creates a caste based society - it is difficult to accept other social systems whereby everyone is seen equal. Some people are born with skills and creative gifts and according to their strengths, they shape their career. Some people are born with leadership skills while others gain these

skills in their career path. The same applies to those who have careers in fields of arts, science and engineering. The weak and suppressed society has given most of the power to the priests, managers, directors and ministers with the seat of the high castes who have had most of the power and wealth that has been, in some cases, misused to almost destroy humanity. These leaders have given people the false impression of democracy and made the society believe that they actually have some power in political representation as the common vote is used to choose their leaders. However, it is common for corporations to fund election campaigns and political parties have no choice but to follow the direction pointed by the very corporations that have helped them to be elected. There is a high gap in the pay scale between these leaders and workers. We have psychologically created a barrier and placed the leaders on a special seat. Can the factory or government function if the workers or the society are not present?

Let us examine a case that looks at the skill set and contribution of workers and leaders. In a private hospital, the workers are the doctors and nurses who have more than 20 years of experience. The executive officer who is the manager may only have 10 years of experience with managerial or financial qualification. It will be unfair if the workers in this case get paid less than the executive officer, however this happens and is acceptable in our modern capitalist society. In

the case of a fish canning factory, there will be workers who will have more than 20 years of experience that may include technical experience about the food quality, engineering experience and general ground work. Even for a garment factory, workers have experience and special set of skills. They make powerful decisions every day that determines the quality of the product. The executive officer makes important decisions as well and it will be fair if general workers i.e. even cleaners and ground workers have the same pay range as their managers and both are given promotion based on their hard work and not on their position.

Everyone is given the basic pay scale and benefits- so that only those interested in genuinely helping the society should engage in politics, not those who are only motivated by personal benefits. In this way, we can have a better society - everyone is equal, caste-less and those who work hard will get the incentives based on their contribution and performance and not on their position.

## **Consumers and technology**

The consumer culture that has taken over the world survives by imposing the desire to obtain more than one actually needs. This has been promoted through advertisements that are the main tools for 'brainwashing' the society to get more, hence work hard and there is less time to spend and value life. People work double shifts in order to pay for brand names that include new models of phones, television and cars that do not have much difference or features from previous models. Popular culture and fashion is used to make people feel better and in return they have to work harder. The society has been given a notion that happiness will come from power and prestige. Slavery has taken a new form - we are free physically, however, we are psychologically chained similar to the ancient slaves.

Happiness is a mindset dependent on cultural and technological background of the society. Social pressure will make you believe that happiness is in driving a luxury car. If you are in a tribe of an undeveloped community such as a remote rural area in Papua New Guinea, then happiness may be in riding the untamed horse and hunting for wild boar. In

the latter case, money will not worth be anything. Skill and knowledge will be worth more than money.

If we had a sixth sense, where we could see the beauty of a person according to their thoughts and personality, then the dynamics of the commercial world in terms of fashion, consumable goods and entertainment would be so different. It will be difficult to imagine but it does sound more peaceful.

## **Social networks**

Social networks have become an excellent educational tool, however, low percentage of people use it for educational activities. Most people use it for sharing pictures and chatting which helps in social activities. Social networks such as Facebook can become a weapon in terms of privacy and security.

This level of communication was not there in known human history and it will have effects on the way our minds represent the world. Our mind is continuously becoming dependent on search engines and addicted to social networks. Social networks have given freedom of information and social communication that has affected relationships whereby in some cases, people get married through it and marriages are also broken from it.

Social networks only provide the medium of communication, the problem lies in the weak minds that abuse these systems and engage in offensive activities that conflict with Internet safety and privacy policies.

Social networks give people who have limited social skills the opportunity to enable a social life. It also gives those who feel that they are physically not so attractive the opportunity to attract friends with their psychological/spiritual beauty. Moreover, there is a global community of friends so distance does not become a problem for those who share similar interests.

Social networks enable complete media freedom as there is no censorship of opinions on social and political topics that promote freedom of expression.

## **Climate change and health issues**

Conferences, symposiums and seminars about climate change and health occur all around the world but little has been done to implement the discussions. The key players in health and climate change are the government, corporations and the academia.

In the academia, it is common to have a team of motivated researchers who are interested in adding to the body of knowledge while the rest are interested in publishing in order to get their curriculum vitae updated for promotions. The problem is that the end goal of academia is publication of their research in quality journals and in most cases, the journey ends there.

The government (usually the so called democratic ones), on the other hand, are easily influenced by large corporations who invest in elections and help in campaigns etc, in order to later influence the government to make decisions for their benefit which at times ignores the research from the academia. We are aware that enough research has been done that shows harmful effects of alcohol beverages, cigarettes and fizzy drinks. We allow our young to become victims and then later in life, there is a discussion on non-communicable diseases (NCD's). There has not been much done to restrict fizzy drinks and fast food advertisements that enforces a popular culture in our modern lifestyle that involves sitting around the television and laptop and become submissive of social networks and cheap television drama that sub-consciously brainwashes the population towards overconsumption of these addictive products.

There is a large gap between what has been found and validated by science and what has been implemented by the government. The role of the government must be to protect the population from low quality foods and educate them in terms of issues such as climate change, nature, and environmental and protection.

We talk about animal rights and yet have difficulty to survive without meat. We have formed habits with the intake of food and resources that is harmful as they have been advertised in such way that we ignore the natural alternatives. Our local beer is off course 'the sportsman beer', however, we ignore



the large amount of calories it pumps into our system. Fizzy drinks and beverage companies are the major sponsors of sports and other similar events in Fiji. Mobile phone companies send promotional text every day and will have difficulty in sending text messages about climate change and health issues. We have a good supply of coconut water however, its easier to spend on a bottle of fizzy drink. Our country has a good supply of fish and livestock and yet people purchase red meat (lamb) from overseas that have high fat content along with corned meat.

In general, the education system we have is naive and ignorant, it does not bring that awareness to people so that they can make a good choice regarding what they eat and what they do with their lives. The current education system has turned the world to a selfish corporation that is constantly harming itself.

The only way to move forward is through education and strict government policies that are built on scientific research and investigation.

## **Idolatry and spirituality**

There are many ways of representing the divine. The divine can be represented by a thought, a name, a symbol, an idol, a sound, human gesture and expressions such as spiritual dance and songs and acts of kindness and compassion.

A major argument by some divinely revealed religious movements gave idolatry as a major reason for dismissing the faiths of other religions.

Idolatry is an artistic expression of representing the divine. When a person prays to an idol, it is not necessarily true that the person thinks that the idol is God but rather uses the representation to get into the devotional mode.

The person praying to an idol is in a high state of spiritual awareness. This is because the person sees the presence of God in a simple piece of rock or stone. In some Dharmic (Hindu) religious philosophies, the presence of God is in the whole universe that includes living being and non-living

objects. It shows that the concept of God and form is not confined to human figures - but nature itself is part of God. It makes humans as equal as any other living being that implements equal rights for animals.

The person with spiritual awareness views God in nature and nature in God. The person with spiritual awareness goes beyond the scriptures and the prophets and questions the ethical basis of dogmatic belief systems. This questioning forms the beginning of the journey to self-realisation.

## **Religious conversions**

The love and fear for God was used for political control in some divinely revealed religions systems.

During colonisation, European civilisations seized land from indigenous people throughout the world. The bigger loss for the indigenous was in losing the tradition and cultural practises which these societies were using or centuries and millenniums.

In the quest to spread Islam throughout Asia, a number of cultures and belief systems were destroyed. In India alone, during the Turkic, Arab and Mughal invasions, thousands of temples were broken down and thousands of people were brutally murdered and villages were destroyed in the name of religion<sup>36</sup>.

The iTaukei traditional religion in Fiji gave the highest respect to the spirit of nature. The followers worshipped Dakuwaqa and Degei, the shark and snake God which were believed to protect Fiji. One of the main weaknesses of the traditional iTaukei religion was that there were no scriptures associated with it and hence the practise and belief systems were slowly being forgotten. The missionaries took advantage and gradually introduced Christianity to the indigenous Fijian population in return for material goods, education and mutual respect.

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36. Persecution of Hindus:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution\\_of\\_Hindus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Hindus)

Although the iTaukei traditional religious elements are part of the iTaukei culture, the participation of activities in traditional belief systems are seen as idolatry and satanic belief systems.

Is religious conversion ethical and does it reflect anything on spirituality and humanity? Is it ethical to convert the person and only then offer him or her help?

The most unethical behaviour of any religious movement is religious conversion due to the political nature of their religion. Religious conversion in exchange for material possessions and respect is not spiritual or humane.

## **Knowledge and consciousness**

The brain is a window for consciousness to experience the physical world. The brain acquires knowledge from observation and experience from literature. The acquired knowledge is temporarily stored as short time memory and in the initial stage there is not much understanding and awareness of the knowledge.

Real learning occurs when this knowledge has been understood with awareness. With awareness, this knowledge becomes a part of our consciousness. The knowledge which is part of consciousness, will be with us, for many lives to come given that death of the physical body does not imply that consciousness ceases to exist as given in the concept of reincarnation<sup>37</sup>. In the philosophy of reincarnation given by Dharmic religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism, we carry knowledge from previous lives. Reincarnation forms an analogy on a spiritual level to the theory of evolution<sup>38</sup>. This is one of the reasons that some of us are born with artistic, technical and mathematical talents that enable us to easily work in those fields without much training.

We manifest from the spiritual to the material dimension and consciousness transcendences into a physical body. Consciousnesses is not born, but rather transforms and takes

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37. Scientific research on reincarnation has been carried out by psychiatrist Dr. Ian Stevenson who examined children who could recall their past lives:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reincarnation\\_research](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reincarnation_research)

38. The concept of *Dasavatara* (ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu) in Hinduism has been compared to theory of evolution. :

part in the physical continuity according to Hindu and Buddhist philosophy.

We must be aware of the nature of consciousness and knowledge when imparting knowledge to children at their early age. The knowledge we impart becomes part of their consciousness and forms a major attribute of the personality. We must not implant fear and ignorance in children. When fear and ignorance become part of consciousness at an early age, it is very difficult for the adult to become liberated with knowledge and awareness.

Children must be exposed to different social lifestyles and religious systems. Divinely revealed religious dogmas must not be imposed to children, but rather, they should be taught religion as a subject where several religions are discussed and in that way children can choose their own spiritual path as they grow. If we raise children who get exposure from several religions and cultures, then we can expect a tolerant religious society in the future.

### **On the middle path**

The ego will always tend to choose and survive in the extreme; either to be or not to be. The ego can make a person die or kill in the name of love.

The mind usually provides reasoning in favour of the ego. The ego can make a religious man fast for days for the love of God. It does not matter if the man is abusive to others during that fasting period. However, the ego would make him carry on and that man can even become violent for his fast. That man can even commit suicide in the name of God. That is actually not love for God, but for the preservation of the ego.

The ego wants to be the best in all circumstances. There is no in between option for the ego. The ego wants to be in the extreme. One must question their religious values on the basis if they amplify the ego. There is nothing spiritual about the values that strengthen the ego as spirituality flourishes in the absence of the ego.

According to the Buddha, freedom and spiritual liberation can only take place with the absence of the ego. Therefore, the

Buddha encouraged the middle path that is in between the two extremes where the ego diminishes and finally dies. The death of the ego forms the path towards Nirvana.

## **The ocean of Nirvana and Samadhi**

We are drops of water separated by individuality. When one attains liberation, individuality becomes a shadow and we become part of the divinity of the ocean.

In that divinity, there is no racism, no religious differences, no nationalism and hatred. That ocean is only filled with love.

With every breath we take, our mind keeps on the struggle to safeguard the ego which binds us to the reality of the world projected by the mind. In that reality, one's existence is independent of other beings. We feel that we are separate from the others. At times, we become self-centred and climb up the ladder of success while stepping on the weak and poor.

The ego keeps us away from our true and spiritual nature. It clings to a limited perception of science where the approach is firmly logical and ignores the holistic view of life in order to perceive the physical universe. The ego tries to separate science from spirituality, although, the destination of both is to find the truth behind our existence.

When the universe does not revolve around the wishes of the ego, it gets hurt and the mind suffers. It is the ego that creates a world that is independent from the spiritual dimension in us. It is the ego of materialism that denies the spiritual element that binds and defines us.

Consciousness is always present in all the stages of our manifestation, either it is spiritual or material. The mind with its logical set of constructs is needed for survival in the material dimension. However, through survival it accumulates the dirt and negativity around itself. The goal of spirituality is to cleanse the mind with knowledge and meditation.

In some religions, the negative actions associated with the ego are often referred to as evil or satanic. The goal of this religious perspective is to seek the protection from God through prayer from evil and negative forces. There is '*reward for heaven*' and the '*fear from hell*' with protection from God with devotion and prayer. Some followers also feel that they

accumulate points to enter heaven by saving the ignorant who are either atheists or from different religious backgrounds that are seen as superstition through their perspective.

Dharmic religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism have been well aware of the ego and the focus of their religious philosophies have been to condition the mind and eventually take control of the ego.

The mind and the ego cannot be conditioned or taken control merely through knowledge. Mundane knowledge and education system conditions the mind to a level, however, it does not have the ability to take over the ego. Therefore, the main methodology in the Dharmic religions for self-realization has been meditation that has been practised for thousands of years in India <sup>39</sup>.

The actual Satan is in the ignorant mind that is fuelled from the ego. There is no external entity called Satan that takes control over our mind and makes us engage in selfish and violent actions. In order to be free from suffering, one has to go through the required conditioning. The first step is knowledge and devotion.

One has to surrender the mind to God and meditation is about surrendering the mind to the supreme being and becoming part of the supreme being or consciousness that is undefined and at times called wholeness or emptiness. Atheists usually viewed nature as God.

When the mind is surrendered and the strength of the ego eventually disappears, a new person is born who is one with the ocean that is often called Nirvana or Samadhi. There is liberation. There is freedom from the mind and the ego. That is our original state and at times referred to as enlightenment.

## **Limitations on observations**

The universe we know about is from observations which are limited to our senses. If there is an object that cannot be known by the mind through the senses that use medium such as sight, sound, smell, touch and taste then, that implies that object does not exist.

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39. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_meditation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_meditation)

Therefore, all that which is without form and cannot be known through our physical senses does not exist. If there is an alien being around us in a form unknown to our senses, we would easily conclude that the being does not exist.

A large portion of the universe is called dark matter and dark energy that cannot be fully observed or explained through science of the day<sup>40</sup>.

Our limited observatory senses has enabled modern physics to study a number of phenomenon in the universe. However, we must always be aware that all we know about the universe and about our existence is limited to our observatory senses.

We cannot perceive the ultimate reality with our observatory senses. It has limitations. To know the truth, we must rise above the mind and the sensory organs and be liberated from any limitations that logic has imposed.

Our intuitive mind does not rely on our physical senses as it is governed by the metaphysical properties in us that have yet not been explored with modern science. The science of self realisation has the path that uses meditation to explore our metaphysical qualities that are yet not fully defined and are not limited by our thoughts and observatory senses.

## **Prayer**

A prayer makes us become aware of the union with the divine. We become aware of that union during the prayer. If the prayer consists of needs and wants, it addresses no external divine entity but rather, the manifestation of the God within. A prayer dissolves the mind with the Self that constitute the core of our being. In prayer, we become a drop of water that dissolves into the ocean.

Our mind creates a new reality every moment through knowledge and experience, therefore we are in control of our destiny that is defined by our present thoughts and actions. We have the ability to create our own reality. However, our own reality gets influenced by the environment that include other people, media, religion and also by our own mindset and

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40. Dark Matter: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark\\_matter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_matter)

ego. Therefore, we must keep ourselves in good company and free ourselves from any limitations imposed by the society, the education system and our religion.

The future is not written and we create the future in every moment of the present. We should not have the attitude to blame God for the misfortune in our lives as we are the creators of our own destiny. We pray only to realize this fact and through our prayers, we uplift ourselves to that level of confidence and awareness. A prayer gives us self confidence and motivation.

A silent prayer that is free from needs and wants, thoughts and words, is meditation. Meditation is being alone with oneself, without being disturbed from thoughts. We rise in the level of our awareness and consciousness through prayer and meditation.

A prayer is good for the individual and when selfless, a prayer is good for the society. Selfless prayer is Karma Yoga. The experience from meditation cannot be easily expressed in words, as human language has its own limitations. Therefore, no scripture or scientific book can express the ultimate reality since words have their limitations.

Through a prayer, one takes the first step in dissolving the ego created by social conditioning and the mind. Through a prayer, one understands that there is something greater than us and understand that we are drops that make up the ocean. Through prayer one goes towards the spiritual path and understands the purpose of life.

## **Ethics and society**

The way we live our lives is highly influenced by the society. A violent society would not see wrong in violent actions by an individual from the society. The foundation of social ethics should not be established with respect to the actions of a society. Ethics must be established through science, philosophy and reasoning that is independent of the societies belief system. Love, kindness and compassion are the basic elements from which all ethical foundations are established.



From a Buddhist perspective, ethics is established by understanding the nature of suffering. How does that particular action harm you or harm others? The answer to this question in relation to an event can be used to establish ethical constructs; what should and should not to be done. The ethical constructs should not be based on a popular opinion of the society or concepts from institutionalised religions that have little foundations in terms of science and philosophy.

## **Prayer and love**

Love, kindness and compassion comes from strength. A prayer in weakness seeks some gain and strength. We usually pray in weakness. We seek God in weakness and when the strength comes, the need for God disappears.

There are some people who try to impress God with sacrifice, rituals, fasting and offerings through prayer and other religious activities. Some think that there is an external God who is in need for our prayer and will get upset if we question or do not carry out the activities as given in religious books. The God who would be in need for such attentions through prayer and offerings would be an egoist suffering from narcissistic personality disorder. There is a difference between spirituality and superstition. Spirituality is based on reasoning through science and investigation while superstition is based on fear and blind belief systems. The science for spirituality is in the development stages and more research will be done in near future to get certain truths established that has a holistic view of life.

A prayer enables us with strength with spiritual motivation that we may have lost during the times of weakness. A prayer helps us to gain confidence that can be uplifting. In the pursuit of the materials, we ignore that the light of God is within us. Our strength gets lost in the wilderness of the material world. When we get weak, we pray for external Godly intervention or a miracle to help us in overcoming the difficulties. Only with spiritual strength, we can fight the difficulties in day to day life and also help others to overcome their problems.

## God is everything

Nothing is God. Something is God. Everything is God.

Nothing is something, and even something is part of everything<sup>41</sup>.

Therefore, everything is God<sup>42</sup>.

Nature is driven by the presence of divine consciousness. Nothing happens by itself as energy is neither created nor destroyed. Even the concept underlying randomness is a creation of the divine consciousness. Our being is part of that consciousness and there is a higher purpose for us to play in the development of the universe. To bring the universe in a peaceful state, we need to create a reality of love, joy and freedom where there is discipline.

*Is our being or consciousness the projection of the physical brain?* The mind is just an organ, a shadow of the physical brain. Just as a driver uses a car to move from one point to another, consciousness uses the physical body and the brain to exist in the material dimension. When the brain dies, consciousness with its experience of the material dimension

remains as a form of energy that is neither created nor destroyed, only transformed. Consciousness is a form of energy.

Meditation will help one see and become their true nature. Meditation can enable a being to become one with God. Every human being has the potential to become God. Buddha became enlightened and thus he became God. The concept of Avatar<sup>43</sup> refers to God transcending as man (Krishna and

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41. Tao Te Ching is the central book of Taoism that focuses on the nature of the existence, universe, Being and God: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tao\\_Te\\_Ching](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tao_Te_Ching)

42. The Upanishads are the central books of Hindu philosophy that lays the foundation of Hinduism. Advaita Vedanta philosophy views the creator and creation as the same that implies that the universe is God: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upanishads>

43. Avatar is the descent or incarnation of the supreme or divine being into an earthly body: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatar>

Rama) and Avadhut<sup>44</sup> is when man reaches the state of enlightenment and attains God consciousness (Buddha and Mahavira).

## Constraints of language

Science and religion cannot express the ultimate truth as their findings are written in journals and sacred books which are expressed with human language that has limitations as it is defined by logic.

According to eastern mystics and philosophers, the human language has constraints and cannot fully express about the nature of a particular phenomenon. The statements, '*sugar is sweet*', '*chocolate is sweet*' or '*candy is sweet*' have their limitations as we know that the experience we gained while having these is different as the sweetness is different. If the same word sweet is used with more details such as 'very sweet' or 'little sweet', more information about the experiences can be given, however, limitations will remain as language has constraints. Language cannot express the ultimate truth. Even in mathematics, some thoughts are expressed as infinity or undefined, since the mind has its limitations to fully comprehend these ideas.

Even poetry cannot fully describe their sweetness, however, it can come close through literary devices such as imagery and metaphor that can give certain ideas to the mind to build its own perception. This is why the greatest works of philosophy and spirituality were written using the language poetry in ancient times.

The ultimate truth cannot be defined by language and logic. The mind has constraints due to the sensory inputs. Our sensory inputs are not as good as that of some of the animals. Dogs have better sense of smell than humans. Our mind depends on our senses and important information about our surroundings are at times not experienced due to limitations in our senses. The ultimate truth can only be experienced. This is why ancient sages in India emphasized meditation as the basis of self discovery and the study of nature and matter. Only through meditation, one can attain the realization and

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44. Avadhut is state of enlightened or union with the supreme consciousness of a spiritual seeker:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avadhuta>

become aware of the ultimate reality that is difficult to be fully contained or defined with words, thoughts, mathematical expressions, literary devices, visible arts and music.

## **Democratic communism**

The world has experience the negative effects of dictatorial communism due to the implementation of the original idea of communism given by Karl Marx where dictatorship is used to enforce it. This certainly does not work since we cannot rely on a single person or group to enforce the transformation of the society where resources are shared.

An alternative implementation would be democratic communism. A legal system such as a constitution can be used to implement the changes needed for the future where humanity reaches the peak and wealth and knowledge is shared. This does not mean that the market cannot be free and only the government should run the market. The government can compete with the free market and substantial amount of tax can be used to distribute the wealth with the underprivileged. A free education system can then help the masses get over poverty line. This would be a socialist system and that true democratic communism can also be achieved. A caste-less and classless society is the feature of the highest state of humanism.

Just because communism has not worked in the past does not mean that it will never work in the future. The world is entering a different age of information and education. With time, education will be freely accessible through online learning and after few centuries the world's collective level of education will rise. Socialism and communism "the ability to share what you have earned with others", will then be more practical and systems of governance will change. I don't think that there has ever been a democratic communism implementation in a developed country where infrastructure and education has been in its peak. However, the communism philosophy marks the peak of humanity and humanity should not lose hope on it.

The idea of democratic communism would be to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor and have a caste-less society. The type of education will have direct effect on

poverty. When the skill set is given to the poor, then they will have the means to get proper jobs. Those who are lazy and ignorant- a special programme can be used to address them. It does not mean that one can be lazy and enjoy the benefits of the hardworking in the communist state. The goal is not to have a 'wealthy' society where the wealth is handled by the elite one percent, but distributed over the whole of the society and education is a form of wealth. The wealth of humane and moral fibre is the most important in a future society.

If you have 10 kg rice that you are not using (which may later rot and be thrown away), and there is a village next to your house dying without food, then in a capitalist system - it is legal for you to retain to the 10 kg rice. In a communist system, that rice will be legally shared with those who need it. That is humanity.

Open Source Software<sup>45</sup> is a successful implementation of the idea of communism in practice. Open source software such as Linux is very reliable and powerful that most of the world internet servers use it. Android devices use Linux as their operating system and most of the top research labs in the world run simulations of their scientific experiments on Linux. Everyone is free to contribute to Linux and no one owns it, we are all free to use it and extend. That is part of the philosophy of communism.

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45. Open Source Software refers to software that is free to use and extend: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open-source\\_software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open-source_software)

## **Discussion during the Krishnastami in Nadi, 2012**

A: What is on the highest state, Dharma or Karma?

B: Karma

A: If you don't have Dharma, i.e. the wisdom to understand between right and wrong, how will you serve selflessly and do your Karma?

A: How can you attain Dharma?

B: With Vidya and Gyan (wisdom) from the spiritual and philosophical texts.

A: Dharma is not the spiritual text itself, but the wisdom that we get from understanding the verses. Just a mere worship of the text won't give you Dharma.

B: What is God, how can it be described?

A: Can you describe Love? You can represent it, but can you fully describe it with words or pictures? The same is for the concept of God that is a state of consciousness, not a personality or an object.

## PART III: EXPRESSIONS

*In these expressions, the Atman is referred to as Self. The subtle body or soul is referred as Jivah. In Advaita Vedanta philosophy of Hinduism, the Atman and Brahman (God) are seen as one.*





## **On Poetry**

1. A poet's mind travels through the gateway of intuition and imagination. This gateway is not restricted by physical laws and logic. The poet acts as a pivot that balances the physical and the metaphysical. The poet creates a new world with values that are valid in difficult situations and environments and applicable at different times. This world is submerged in art, rhythm and romanticism. This is why some of the greatest thoughts in human history were conveyed through the medium of poetry of which some constituted philosophical texts that enforced spirituality and humanism.
2. It's difficult to express feelings with words. Language certainly has its limitations in expression of reality. This is why art and poetry has been used to express the heightened spiritual thoughts.
3. A scientist is thirsty for an explanation of this existence while the mystic enjoys its experience. The artist paints its beauty and the poet transcribes its rhythm.
4. The life of art and poetry breathes the air of simplicity.

## Love

1. The day is gloomy when the clouds of the ego and *ignorance* hide all that can be brightened by *love*.
2. One will not crave for money and make life a business if the heart is wealthy with Love.
3. A lover will have difficulty to be an egoist and an egoist will have difficulty to become a lover. One has to leave the shadow of the other.
4. Compassion and kindness are expressions of love.
5. Love cannot be reduced to a mathematical expression. It cannot be described fully with words as language has limitations. Every individual has a unique experience and understanding of the concept of love. The same is applicable to the concept of God.
6. Love transcendent the mind. The mind has no control over it. One cannot plan, reason or decide, it just happens.
7. Love is a gift from God. Love is where the *ego* is not. The weak and insecure mind gets possessive. Love requires immense strength.
8. It is easy to confuse '*habits*' for '*love*' in a relationship. With time, a relationship becomes a habit. The disputes will show how much tolerance and understanding there is which reflects on Love. Habit is a psychological problem. And love begins from the psychological and rises towards the spiritual. Love wears out when the ego strengthens. This is why it is difficult to be friends with egoists.
9. The ego is from knowledge that lacks spiritual wisdom. The ego gives rise to ignorance. One has to win over the stubbornness and turn towards love.

10. Love is a state, not an object which has to be possessed. Possession destroys love. Weak people can't love as love is all about giving. Love is in giving respect and freedom to the other. Love is not about taking and possessing.
11. To be in love with the whole, rather than a single person is the heightened state of love. This is total freedom and there is peace.
12. The love that we know of is seen as illusion or Maya in Indian philosophy as there is a thin line between love and hatred. Your love for someone can easily turn into hatred due to the circumstances and the behaviour of the person. Love in marriage or a relationship is also conditional due to lust and physical needs. There are stages of Love. On the highest stage is the love you have for others without any conditions. This will happen with the level of your consciousness. This will happen with experience, knowledge and awareness. This is the love that Jesus, Buddha and Krishna have been pointing towards. This love is devotion, pure and unconditional, this love is the essence of God.
13. Psychologically, love and hatred are dependent on emotions such as regret, achievement and satisfaction and other experience which gets engraved in our consciousness. Love and hatred on the psychological level fade away with memory. Hatred is a relationship as the "other" remains in us psychologically. A phase such as "I hate the weather" and "I hate someone" establishes a relationship with these entities. The emotion of hatred fades when the consciousness rises to a higher level. Hatred can only remain with ignorance. Hatred does not exist, it is our own creation. When the fog of desires, expectations, anger and ignorance gets cleared with knowledge and wisdom, Love is all that remains. We are an expression of love, naturally.
14. Biologists refer to the heart as an organ which draws blood. Spiritualists refer to it as a symbol of love. The shape portrayed by the heart and its purpose is

unimportant. Compassion and kindness expressed from this symbol is the salvation for humanity.

15. There is a lot to learn from the relationship between the flowers and the bees. The bees use the flower for its nectar and at the same time disperses pollens. The flower feeds the bees and pollinates. Both are interlinked in harmony and their inter-dependency is peaceful. Their message to the world is clear, to live with love and cooperation.
16. Love in its spiritual state is non-manifested. Love is an experience. The manifestation of love in the material dimension is kindness and compassion.
17. Most of the suffering in the world is caused by the selfishness, anger and fear. To this day, the world is suffering due to political, religious and racial instability caused by selfishness. The lack of education and ignorance about the purpose of our existence constitutes to human suffering. We can eliminate selfishness with Love, compassion and kindness.
18. Love flourishes in the absence of the ego.
19. Love is divine. In its experience, one transcends the mind. The mind has limitations and cannot fully describe it with words and logic. love is the natural state of man. Meditate, transcend the mind and experience love.
20. In the land of love, selfishness suffocates like a fish out of water.
21. Love is a state, a fragrance; not a personality or a relationship. God is not a personality or a judgement in the sky, but an attribute of that same fragrance that reveal kindness and compassion.
22. When the "I" disappears, we become the spectrum of love and the expression is laughter, compassion, joy and ecstasy.

23. The ship of '*respect*' will eventually sink with '*fear*'. It can only sail through the storm of emotions and expectations with the power of '*love*'. Respect is an expression of love.
24. There is no greater religion than *love* and *compassion*.
25. The freedom to selflessly share what we have and have joy while doing so is an elevated state of consciousness. In this state, you are in love, not just with one person, but the world.
26. In complete *love*, there is no ego as one sees the other as themselves.
27. If the seed is watered properly, it will sprout. If love is in the heart, a unique simile comes to the face naturally. Everything is more colourful and there is peace.
28. If it is possessing, it is not love but an act of the ego to increase its territory. love is about losing, not taking.
29. Love is a blessing, a gift from the divine. A river overflows when it cannot hold enough of the rain. The weak minds who cannot hold the blessing of Love will suffer rather than celebrating it. It takes immense strength to become a lover as love is all about giving and the weak cannot give.
30. You may think that the love that blossoms in you is dependent on someone else; however, its dependent on how you perceive the world and you will water the flower within you with that perception.

## Meditation

1. We lose energy when we give attention to unreasonable thoughts. Meditation is about being the master of our thoughts so that our thoughts do not make us restless. In the meditative state, we become peaceful as our thoughts cannot lure us. Just as the heart pumps blood, the mind is an organ that creates thoughts. Transcend the mind and become your true Self. This is meditation.
2. If it cannot be defined, implies that the mind with its logic cannot comprehend it leaving you no choice but to experience it. So enter this circle of no-mind, into meditation, and experience love and God - the water and its one true source, the well.
3. In the beginning, some representation in the form of art, idols, mantra , music and dance is needed and as the journey goes deeper, those representations take another form. Merge in the deep silence and become *whole*.
4. The ego is a barrier around your true nature - the witness within that knows *love, laughter, peace* and *joy*. The *witness* radiates a subtle vibration, an energy and people get attracted to you without a reason. It depends on your ego that acts as a barrier, if this energy gets through. This is why the selfish and egoists can't keep genuine friends and have difficulty in understanding the essence of the *love* and laughter in their *Being*.
5. The world is mundane for a lover and a mystic and the world labels them as an eccentric and 'crazy'. You will lose your mundane identity as you drown in the well of love and meditation.

6. We put in so much effort to decorate the world of the outside, to know the world of the outside and leave the world of the inside unsettled and undiscovered. This unsettled and undiscovered world gives a restlessness; even when you achieve everything in the mundane, you feel that something is missing.
7. Peace is there when the witness in you (Self) is aware of the *ego*, the *mind* and the *desires* and you do not get controlled by them.
8. The present advancement of science and technology gives more options to beautify our body and the external world. In this pursuit, we tend to drift away from the internal world and ignore to concentrate on the beauty within.
9. The ego does not want to change - with change the ego is threatened. The ego will ignore knowledge as with it, a change will come. The universe is a vehicle of transformation and one must learn, adapt and grow. Most of our sadness emerges just because the ego has been hurt and expectations have not been fulfilled.
10. Lust seeks the body, it is mundane. Love seeks the spirit, it is divine.
11. I have been noticing that some try to fulfil their emptiness with politics. One cannot fulfil their thirst from a dry well.

## **Spirituality and higher consciousness**

1. The true focus of spirituality has nothing to do with theism or atheism, but to use them for the transformation of human consciousness. Theism and Atheism are just the vessels used in the journey along with science and humanism. One has to eventually leave this vessel when the destination is reached.
2. Spirituality is not necessarily restricted to belief in God. One can be spiritual and also be an atheist. As the consciousness rises, one experiences and knows God and also in turn know themselves. Art, Literature and Philosophy are the mediums that enable one to raise their level of consciousness.
3. Spirituality is concerned about eradicating violence in the thought process of man. Man by nature, is a violent animal. Physically, there is competition for survival of the fittest through natural selection. Being vegetarian may mean that once is non-violent towards other animals, but it does not mean that one has overcome the violent thought processes in themselves. It may sound spiritual to be vegetarian, but one should not suppress themselves or there will be perversion. With the knowledge of the Self and meditation, the seed of love will sprout and the fragrance of kindness and companies will naturally be revealed. When this happens, violence will be fully eradicated.
4. The goal of spirituality is not only to study the physical world, but to understand the nature of man so that he finds his true purpose in this universe. The goal is to elevate the level of consciousness of man, and make him aware that the universe is holistic. The goal is to make everyone aware of Dharma (duty and ethics) and highlight the importance of love, humility, kindness and compassion. Either as theists, agnostics or as atheists, we can all enrich our lives and have the freedom to bring a transformation in us.



5. Science cannot define the truth as logic has its limitations. This is why profound spiritual books were written using mystical poetry, not with mathematics.
6. There are only two paths in the search. One path is philosophy and the other is mysticism. Science comes under philosophy and mysticism is spirituality. Mysticism does not have predefined rules and boundaries. It relies on direct experience, not the experience you get by reading books or academic papers. There is no 'third person', but 'first person' experience. There is deep psychology in the beginning of the spiritual journey. One needs to get over their psychological problems or constraints. To take off, one needs to prepare the plane and once the plane is taken off, then the spiritual journey begins.
7. The individual ego and ignorance is what separates us from the ultimate reality. We need the ego in the early stages for career growth through knowledge, however with time we need to let go of the ego. The ego is not motivation and these concepts are not the same. One can be motivated to help others, that is selfless, but that motivation will come as the consciousness is developed with the right knowledge and spiritual discipline. Peace is there when the Self is aware of the ego so that the mind with its set of desires and do not get controlled by them. Good spiritual literature, philosophy and meditation will enable one to come to that level of realisation.
8. The truth or ultimate reality (Brahman) can be experienced when one is free from the analysis and judgement by the mind (Maya). Analysis and judgement creates noise and there is distortion between you and the truth. Do not judge, just experience the phenomenon as it is; this is meditation.
9. The understanding and realisation of knowledge is spirituality. The scriptures and scientific books are source of information, the scriptures discuss the internal world (consciousness, deep psychology and transcendental science) and science investigates on the external/physical world. The advantage of science

is that one can study and validate the phenomenon from a 'third person' perspective. In spirituality, one can only realise the phenomenon by self experience rather than results from others. This is more difficult and takes more energy, effort and time.

10. Spirituality is a remedy for fine tuning your mind, body and spirit with each other. When tuned, there is freedom, peace and harmony.
11. The truth is water and one cannot hold water in their fist. Science is based on logic and it cannot hold the ultimate reality in its hands. Equations and notations fall short. Philosophy holds the hands of science, at times it does not need evidence, but rational reasoning is enough to establish an idea of the truth.
12. God is not a personality, but rather, a state of consciousness. The highest state of consciousness is God. To say that Buddha was enlightened means he achieved the highest state of consciousness.
13. Painting a rusted metal does not completely solve the problem. One needs to investigate on the cause which is also dependent on the nature of the metal and its exposure to the environment.
14. It's the weakness in people that makes them resist to change and progress. The ego makes one's life stagnant like a pool of water where mosquitoes breed. Love makes one's life fresh like the flowing river where the ego is weak and progress is inevitable. Love is the strength. The ego is the weakness.
15. The ignorance of the inner voice is all that leads us to darkness. The spiritual journey begins when one stops lying to themselves.
16. My goal is to seek that complete freedom and transform to the level from where I become aware of selfish desires and the limitations and fears imposed to me by the society. This is what I define as religiousness - to be at peace and free.

17. I view spirituality the higher peak of consciousness that has the foundation of science and philosophy. Spirituality is in climbing up the peak with science and logic and rising upwards. The ultimate reality is beyond words and logic. Therefore, science is the beginning.
18. Knowledge can lead one in the cage of egotism or to the ocean of freedom. The type of knowledge is important for one to be free from their ego and be at peace. Knowledge and wisdom are not confined to certificates and degrees.
19. Spirituality is a journey where one gets free from the ego and becomes one with the *whole* which is also known as the divine. With experience, one discovers their true nature. Gradually, one gets free from limitations, free from ignorance of the voice within, free from attachments, free from expectations that are inter-dependent on happiness, free from the prison of the mind.
20. We have the possibility to lose our mundane identity and enter within ourselves, to become nothing and one with God.
21. True freedom is in the circle of zero expectations. Total freedom is beyond the mind. The 'thinking' process without awareness can become a cage.
22. Knowledge and wisdom cannot be erased from our consciousness. We come to this world with nothing and leave with knowledge and experience.
23. Ignorance and the resistance to progress is self-destruction. Progress is a slave to attitude and time.
24. Love and the ego are inversely proportional to each other. Where there is extreme egotism, there is no love.
25. The journey of life is in breaking free from the illusion (Maya) of attachments and desires and understanding our true nature. The peak of the journey is in waking

from this dream into reality and asking oneself; is this restlessness really me or just a state of my mind that changes just as the weather?

26. The flames of the ego will be diminished with spiritual knowledge which opens the path of selfless action.
27. Knowledge without any spiritual inclination gives rise to the ego and knowledge with spiritual inclination sets the path to peace and freedom.
28. The beauty of a prayer is in selflessness and an expression of love. A truly spiritual person prays for the well-being of others rather than mere selfish needs and wants. A prayer is not for the fear of God but an appreciation of *love*. The temple is one's heart and true prayer is in selfless action such as kindness and compassion.
29. Since one cannot travel in time, it's useless to regret the past and be worried about the future. The past is a lesson and the future is dependable on the present. This is why it is often said that the present is real.
30. The ego seeks attention to become complete. This makes people chase fame and power and be trapped in the prison of their mind which has certain fears and limitations. Get free from the ego and be at peace.
31. Salvation is in conquering the violent mind and selfish desires.
32. The ego drowns in the ocean of wisdom and knowledge. Seek the ocean and be free.
33. Ignorance is the darkness that fulfils the ego. The ego follows us everywhere. It follows the extremely religious man, the rich and even the poor. The ego strives in the extremes. Move away from the extremes and the ego will disappear and you will be at peace.

34. It is wise to go after the desires that elevate you in their pursuit, not those that make you restless. Evaluate your desires as some desires can elevate you while others can lure you towards self-destruction. Control your mind and desires and not be controlled by them; however, do not suppress them.
35. A lover is confined to mere relationships while the enlightened man is the lover who is free from expectations and any confinements or limitations.
36. True atheism, science and 'free-thinking' can become the doorway to spirituality.
37. Clear your mind when you begin the search. Be free from likes, dislikes and prior conclusions, then the truth will unfold to you.
38. We can assume that someone likes or dislikes us without knowing the person. Based on the assumptions, we build a reality of our own. This reality is *maya* in Indian philosophy that is referred to as an illusion which is the product of our own mind. The true reality can be something similar or totally different.
39. Be true to yourself and make your selfless educational point. It is natural for people to get hurt; it's only their ego's that gets hurt. Bright lights of knowledge will surely make tears of ignorance fall. Do what has to be done, either others like it or not. Enjoy the doing and be a witness to it. Share the humane spiritual knowledge whenever possible.
40. The fog of desires barely leaves anyone. It clings around the mansion of the rich and also encircles the huts of the poor. The rich desire for more wealth and the poor desire to become rich. Restlessness is there in both the rich and the poor as they are both in the extremes. It is weakness and lack of self-awareness that makes one kneel towards every desire. Desire can elevate you towards progress, but it can also bring restlessness as one gets entangled with expectations. One can easily ignore the voice within and lean towards the voices from the media through the radio and

television. The only desire that will let you free and be in peace is the desire for knowledge and wisdom.

41. The hardest thing to be is a '*nobody*'. Everyone tries to hide their fears by being someone. Fearlessness is in being a *nobody*, being free from the mind, free from expectations and non-entangled to desires.
42. I am theist and atheist at the same time. God is wholeness and nothingness at the same time. I do not believe in the creator as nothingness cannot be created. Creation is a concept of the mind. Wholeness and nothingness is beyond time and space.
43. God is something. God is nothing. Something and nothing cannot exist without each other. God is neither something nor nothing and at the same time, both. God is everything. What you seek is not far from you. It is within.
44. One fails to experience the ultimate reality in the influence of education that is based on validated ideas and opinions of other people.
45. The fog of judgements makes it difficult to experience the ultimate reality and find the road to steer the wheel of life.
46. Knowledge makes us '*someone*' and wisdom reduces one to '*nothing*' and there is humility. Knowledge comes from the discovery of the external while wisdom comes from the colourful silence within that is experienced with meditation.
47. We all have the possibility to lose our mundane identity and enter ourselves, to become nothing and one with God.
48. One must intellectually and spiritually evolve with time to be called human; to be only driven by instinct is an attribute of the rest of the animals.

49. We behave different and have different personalities due to our physical body, intelligence, knowledge, environment and the choices we make which determines our destination. The core within us is the same. We all are the waves from the same ocean.
50. Spirituality is the study of consciousness and humane values that leads one's life to a transformation where one becomes their true nature and understands their purpose of life. In this study, there are no limitations; science, literature, philosophy history and religion are some of the essential subjects that enable one to walk on the spiritual path. Kindness and compassion are the natural effects from those who seek and are in control of their ego and the mind that impose fear and limitations. Atheism and theism cannot hold the river that flows in that direction where one has potential to become the ocean.
51. Do not go elsewhere, that silence is within. Do not think, do not judge, do not reason; just experience the reality as it is.
52. Turning off a computer does not mean that data and programs in the *cloud system* or *server* are erased. Just as a computer, the body is hardware and consciousness is software. The laws of cause and effect are applicable to consciousness. This existence will not give us the liberty to completely cease after a life of selfishness.
53. An argument arises when the ego is hurt. And with the ego, the cloud of ignorance drifts one away from the reality.
54. Wisdom is born when the mind and the ego detaches from *knowledge*.

55. Art and spirituality complement each other. The world's oldest literary works such as the *Vedas*, *Upanishads* and the *Mahabharata* had the goal to create a spiritual and humanistic wave in the society in order to cultivate peace and harmony. In all societies, some form of art has been used to express spiritual and transcendental experiences.
56. The ego is the mundane identity that constantly attempts to be extra-ordinary while being rooted in the ordinary. It tries to stand out from the rest of the crowd and become special while in reality there is no transformation of consciousness and the person is a slave of the mundane.
57. Righteousness, unrighteousness and other judgements are concepts created by the mind that change with time and situation. Several religions use the fear of hell and the reward for heaven which are metaphoric. Hell and heaven are within us; heaven is where there is no suffering and hell is suffering. We go through these in everyday life. To be spiritual actually means to open up to the path through which one can lessen and eliminate suffering.
58. Have faith in Love; the rest will be handled by nature.
59. Spirituality is a remedy for fine tuning your mind, body and spirit with each other; when tuned, there is freedom, peace and harmony.
60. In extreme situations and times of need, atheism turns into theism and in good times, theism becomes atheism. Both are just states of mind, distortions, between you and the truth.
61. Logic survives as far as the division of an entity produces another entity that can be measured and is rational. Intuition beings when the result is non-logical and infinite. When the mind drops, one can discover the land of intuition - the land of peace - within.



62. Understanding is there when we become consciously focused and aware of that which has been presented.
63. My goal is to bring science and spirituality together; when this happens, theism and atheism will lose their identity and dissolve, there will be a colourful silence and transformation of human consciousness.
64. There is an internal death and the person is reborn when the ego with its ambitions, desires and fears diminish and disappears. Although the name and the body is the same, the nature of consciousness will be different. This death come when there is experience and realisation - when one is deeply moved by certain events. This is what happened to *Ashoka the Great*<sup>46</sup> when he left war and became a Buddhist monk. This is what "*born again*" implies spiritually.
65. Krishna, Rama, Buddha, Mahavira, Lao Tzo, Zoroaster, Patanjali and Jesus are allegory's (symbolic representation) to the highest state of consciousness. Their birth, divinity and religion do not matter-the message they delivered to mankind is all that matters; on Love and Humanism.
66. A transformation is possible, when you leave your 'comfort zone' and take on challenges that will later define you.
67. The storm of ambitions and desires eased when I tuned inwards, I found myself again, and fell in Love - with myself.
68. A good teacher (guru) will challenge your Being; you will be unconformable at times as your thoughts, values will be challenged for a transformation in you, but the guru will keep you motivated to carry on. The guru will be your friend and at the same time prepare you to stand on your own and make your identity.

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46. Ashoka the Great was an Indian emperor who ruled almost all of Indian subcontinent in 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE.

69. Your own image is subconsciously reflected in the mirror of Scepticism and Belief; true reality may not be as close as you think or feel.
70. We are born with Karma expressed as positive attributes such as talents, humility and negative emotions that include fear and anger we carry these from our past lives. We do not remember how we accumulated them, but some of these attributes are with us and they define our personality. In this life, we have the opportunity to overcome them through education and spirituality.
71. The driving desire within creates a world around; with my thoughts, attitude and action (Karma), I am the sailor of this ship, I create my destiny.
72. Everything I write has been said before in some way, I am just a vessel to redeliver the message.
73. The truth or ultimate reality (*Brahman*) can be experienced when one is free from the analytic mind (*Maya*). Analysis and judgement creates noise and there is distortion between you and the truth. Do not judge, just experience the phenomenon as it is; this is meditation.
74. Humanity began by seeking freedom from slavery, which changes its forms in different societies at different times. Spirituality is about being free from the slavery from the mind which makes one chase the unneeded desires and leave our centre into the world of restlessness.
75. The least people can do is to smile, but it must emerge from the heart.

76. The growth of human consciousness comes through the path of knowledge that is focused on morality, spirituality and humanism (Karma and Dharma). One must get guidance from learned people, have companionship with mature people, read spiritual and philosophical books, seek and investigate, travel, participate in discussions and take time out to serve everyone selflessly. Love yourself and love others.
77. One would be able to better solve everyday problems as their level of consciousness grows. Kindness and compassion will be the natural attributes. The purpose of life becomes clearer. The rose within blossoms and the fragrance of love and compassion will be in the air.
78. Gender is an attribute of the body, not of the Self (Atman). The body is a chariot, not the rider.
79. Applying philosophy (logic) to mysticism (intuition) is like trying to hold water in one's fist.
80. In this mundane plane, you are struggling and surviving. Do not get shaken and lost in the struggle, become a witness to it. You are not your body, profession, race or religion. Seek and uncover your true identity. This will mark a journey where spirituality begins and that part which was imposed to you will fade away.
81. One cannot exist without a theory, a perception of life, only in a meditative state you don't have a theory/thought to hold on. The belief systems, either scientific or religious, surround the mind like air around the body.
82. Atheism is a good beginning, however, the journey does not end there. Air-planes are made to fly.

83. The toys naturally disappear as the child grows into a man. Similarly, when the seeker walks further into the spiritual path and rises in their level of consciousness – the light from within brightens the path. The shadow of anger, lust and selfishness that surrounds the seeker become dimmer and eventually disappears.
84. The core of religion is spirituality. This is the region where "you" and "I" do not exist. In that zone, the drop is in the ocean and the ocean is in the drop.
85. The problem is not in walking, but in walking with closed eyes as the journey gets more difficult. The problem is not in the traditions and rituals enforced by religions, but in accepting them without questioning and blindly following. Traditions and rituals are part of culture and can make one's life joyful, and at the same time, they can make life miserable. So think, reason and question the significance of any religious event and do not just follow blindly.
86. There is only one truth and one religion – *Love*.
87. *Creation* can only be possible when time is present. If time was created with the big bang, then the pre-big bang cannot be imagined in the realm of common logic. Where and how the initial form of energy came about is a mystery and science is in denial of the entropy – God.
88. The physical body is just a small tip of the iceberg. It does not define the person.
89. If 'fear' was replaced by 'love', respect would be natural.
90. Priests can claim to know, criminals can also do the same, however, the one who has the touch of *kindness* and *love* is actually the spiritual seeker.
91. Different types of music shape our personality in different ways.

92. There is a difference between loneliness and aloneness. Loneliness is weakness that attempts to get attention to make you feel complete. Aloneness is a blessing, it is about being in the moment, in peace and harmony with yourself and complete. Aloneness is the foundation of meditation.
93. I have faith in God. I know that all religious books were God inspired, but not written by God as all of them have inconsistencies. I love God and I love science. It is sad to see that people have gone to war for different representations of God. The *Holy Spirit*, *Brahma*, *Allah* and *Tao* are different expressions of the same entity.
94. My love for Jesus does not mean that I will ignore Buddha.
95. Joy and sorrow are just the wheels of life, not life itself. There is more to life.
96. Listen, do not react. Become a witness, not an act. Just like the Swan, swim and not get wet from this world of emotions and attachments.
97. Either be the master or the slave of one's desires.
98. One cannot grow without being offended at some stage. It's good to be hurt and challenged on what we hold dear to us. We all need to move from our comfort zones in order to grow spirituality.
99. Only spiritual/humane knowledge can make the weak strong. Knowledge can water the flower of love, ignorance will make it wither.

## Religion

1. I have converted to a religion that cannot be named as it is undefined. There are no temples, no priests, no heaven nor hell, nowhere to go and no leaders or followers. This religion is within--there is silence, joy, freedom and ecstasy.
2. If you remove superstition, tradition, fear of hell and reward for heaven, guilt , prophets, man-made Gods, Dogma and sacred books from *religion*; you will get *spirituality* which encompasses of peace, love, joy, self-awareness, kindness and compassion, equality, humanity, science and reasoning.
3. A religion that nourishes the ego is not humane or spiritual, it certainly leads to conflicts and wars.
4. Pseudo-religions have made God a security guard who spies over us. Do not fear God; embrace the idea that there is something that we emerged from. Love God and listen to the voice within, don't be afraid, just embrace. Know yourself and you will know all that is.
5. Knowledge is the medium with which will help one question religious dogma. The purpose of man is to find oneself and this has been the goal of spirituality. Dogma is political and used to control the masses.
6. The main truth about any religion is that the sacred books have been written by men of which some were wise and thus these books can be called God inspired. The God inspired test for a sacred book is simple: if the book is not dogmatic, it is God inspired. The dogmatic books are written by people with hidden agendas so they don't want you to question.

7. Friedrich Nietzsche's expression "God is dead" meant that the God we have created to suit our needs never existed. Buddha realized this long ago and took God out of religion so that man becomes more mature and independent. We become more conscious and mature when there is no God to blame when our expectations are not met. In the *no God zone*, don't have the option to blame destiny for our misfortunes. Rather than searching for God in the temples, Buddha directed everyone to be one with God through meditation.
8. Do not be in a particular religion due to birth. Be in one with your choice and reasoning. The experience of several religions is even better than one. The ultimate destination is the same, only the road is different. Keep away from dogma and question the religion with science and reasoning.
9. It becomes quite egoistic to express the greatness of God. The greatness of God implies that the person who believes in that concept of God is indirectly associated with that greatness. In this way, people praise their own ego while trying to be religious.
10. Many *so called* holy people use the excuse of God to feed their own ambitions. They refer to religious books to prove their actions are right. The problem is that different religious books do not agree on what is moral. Religious books are part of literature and philosophy and many of them have rusted, many things do not apply to this time any more. Challenge your own beliefs and then only you will be free.
11. The 'I' is a shadow that follows you to the temple and bows down to the priests and politicians. The 'I' stands up high and mighty against the weak. In prayers, the 'I' dominates and there is bondage. Knowledge and love will set you free.

12. The early stages of spirituality may begin from the concept of a personal God illustrated through myths and legends and later this concept dissolves into the experience of God within. Eventually, the seeker gets lured to the light and burns their ego in the flame.
13. The principle of 'conversion' is a political construct enabled in some religions; it has nothing to do with spirituality.
14. The holy books become even holier if they apply to us now and can withstand discussion and debates.
15. An atheist becomes a theist in times of desperation. A theist becomes an atheist when expectations are not fulfilled by the higher power. Both are belief systems and part of the same coin.
16. God does not necessarily need to be a superpower or saviour. If so, why were millions of people not saved in the two world wars and the conflicts of the day. If you think that God would only save you if you recognise him and do prayers and rituals to make him happy; then this God is weak.
17. The '*devil*' portrayed by some religions is just an empty shadow that is a product of the undisciplined mind. When ignorance is lifted from knowledge of the Self, with the light from the source, the shadow clears and life becomes a vessel for the bright source of light.
18. Subtly, the '*devil*' that most religions refer to is within us; the devil is the ego that creates a selfish barrier around us and pursues fame and power. Spirituality is the medium through which we take control of this devil.
19. True religion is a study of ethics and true spirituality is a study of consciousness. These are not to be confused with some organised religions that are torn with guilt, fear and dogma.



20. Religious fundamentalism comes from immaturity, ignorance and egotism.
21. Everyone has the freedom to believe in anything they prefer. The important part is how their belief will make them a good human being and how will it enable them to have a quality and peaceful lifestyle. To be *theists, atheists or agnostic* is just a personal choice. A wise theist will respect atheists and a wise atheist will respect theists. Everyone has the freedom to take their path, to choose their religion, scientific viewpoint and way of life. What one does with their beliefs matters more than the beliefs.
22. Religion is mundane with prayer that requires rituals, tradition, sacrifice and culture. Religion is spiritual with the silence of meditation that blossoms with peace, love, kindness and compassion.
23. Religion, as expressed in art, poetry and traditions become our cultural identity. Religion is spiritual, when unexpressed and unpolluted by the mind and the ego.
24. I am just a spiritual atheist who has a passion for science and religion that brings a transformation from within. Theism and Atheism are the tools that attracts me to that *silence* that is *undefined* and *whole*.
25. The internet revolution has made a very good impact on spirituality and religion; rather than just listening to predefined priests, gurus and pundits, people have the opportunity to read, investigate and reason from the comfort of their homes. In decades to come, the negative constructs of religion (superstition and dogma) will be slowly updated by science and reason and we will enter the holistic world of spirituality where science and humanism will lead humanity.
26. Humanism and religion makes '*selfless service*' a '*duty*' and promotes it through rewards in terms of *karma* and afterlife. However, if the selflessness does not emerge from within, you will do more harm than good. Do not serve with a religious motivation as you will be

bounded with expectations that may later become a frustration. A transformation is happening within if you are in complete joy while sharing and helping others, otherwise, keep away from service. Wait for this transformation; observe yourself, your thoughts and reason.

27. The major weakness in organised religions is in understanding the difference between literature, philosophy and spirituality. Dogmatic religions have argued for long that the myths and legends are 'real' events rather than understanding the symbolic message that exhibits some moral fibre and sparks for meditation and transformation. Rather than understanding the message, much attention has been given in scientifically verifying fables.
28. Any religion that does not have respect for homo-sexuality, women, nature and animals is not spiritual, but a political system. One can have faith and love for God with scientific knowledge.
29. A person who is devoted is essentially one who has completely surrendered in love. One is free from the mind and there is even difficulty to judge basic right and wrong or even realise that one is being fooled. There are priests, temples and religions who fool their devotees in the name of God for political survival. Be careful, examine your religion before you become completely surrendered. Do not fall in the pond if you don't know how to swim, don't make your faith self destructive.
30. *Theology* and *comparative religion* are two different approaches that examines religion. Theology attempts to be an academic study of *Abrahamic* religions such as Christianity and Judaism. Religious studies and comparative religion use *philosophy of religion* to critically examines religions in terms of history, culture, philosophy, composition of texts and ancient language studies using phonology and semantics. Theology is based on belief while philosophy of religion employs the method of scientific inquiry that is open for discussions and debates. In philosophy of religion, the

goal is to understand the belief systems and their emergence and the symbolic meaning behind the poetic and religious verses rather than mere recitals and blind belief.

31. Organised religions have been enforcing a system of politics and governance with ideas such as the love and protection from God, the fear from hell and the reward for heaven. This system of governance has enabled priests to be the policy makers who have escaped any questioning with the principle of dogma and divinely revealed religion. Even the son of God was placed on the cross for questioning the priestly system and yet we are happily repeating the past and sustaining the system with our ignorance.
32. Devotion does not need knowledge and research, however, devotion with knowledge and awareness of its significance can be transcendental. The form of devotion will change with knowledge and also affect the personality of the seeker.
33. There is suffering all around us and only with knowledge and wisdom, we get through life without being over controlled by the external circumstances.

## Science and technology

1. A group of freethinkers and atheists emerged in the information age in the defence politically organised and dogmatic religions. They made up their minds to study the external world of matter which naturally ignored the internal world of consciousness. Free and yet constrained just as a fish that has been taken out of a tiny pond and placed on a larger one and mistakes it for the ocean.
2. Computer science and engineering has the foundations of mathematics and logic but when you go deeper, it's a creative process of engineering software which requires imagination and intuition. Hence, it's also an art. Artists use techniques to paint and beyond the techniques is creativity which is governed by intuition and the wholeness that cannot be defined. Creativity is not a product of the mind, but a gift from that wholeness.
3. One cannot create knowledge, only discover it. There is a difference between the two.
4. The expression of music is truly mathematical, but its effects can be mystical. The foundation of science and logic is the beginning of spirituality.
5. The problem is when people think that mathematics and science is the core of education system and somehow these subjects will cultivate world peace. These subjects may develop intelligence, but do not help the student rise in their level of consciousness. More emphasis must be given on art, literature, ethics and spirituality for the development of human consciousness in our education system.
6. Intelligence is like a microprocessor. Without data and a program, it is useless. Knowledge is data and our state of mind which is part of consciousness is all that makes up the program.

7. True science and religion is in the absence of the ego. The vision is blurred with the ego and the truth is contaminated.
8. The science and logic that governs us all our lives falls short to explain the real cause of death. Health, wealth, knowledge, power and fame become so tiny in front of the gate of death.
9. Science is how we perceive nature with our investigation and experiments which may precisely describe the true reality or give a close description of it. The conclusions of the scientific method are judgements that are subject to change with time. Therefore, the current conclusion of some of the scientific experiment is an illusion to some degree, not the ultimate reality.
10. Only with knowledge, one can distinguish the difference between right and wrong. True religion/spirituality of today is science of future. A lot has to be done regarding the nature of consciousness and human spirit. It is easy to study the seen and difficult to study the unseen.
11. Does the precise scientific knowledge of the electron affect the behaviour of a person in terms of moral values and discipline? Other than technological progress, scientific curiosity has also enabled mankind to develop nuclear and atomic warfare. The curiosity of science has to be well balanced with teachings on morality and values. This is where spirituality is needed. True religiousness is important for a peaceful world.
12. A scientific journal is the reality for a scientist and for a religious person, a holy book forms the reality. The problem in the world is that these realities conflict with each other and there is chaos and confusion. There has to be a middle ground where both parties discuss how relevant these realities are in terms of the development of human consciousness which up-brings a peaceful

society with technological advancements and spiritual transformation.

13. A wise spiritual person will update themselves with science and technology and a wise scientist will be connected with the compassionate touch of spirituality.
14. With humane and spiritual knowledge, we can use science for a good cause such as to solve world health problems, tackle issues of poverty and energy. Without spiritual knowledge, we can use science to create weapons of mass destruction and hence there will be terrorism. So knowledge is important, science on its own can become the reason for the world's destruction. True spirituality is needed, i.e. humanism is needed.
15. What happened before the big bang is something that science through logic cannot answer. One would need transcendental experience and then describe it using art and poetry. Science ends and spirituality begins, for some questions to be answered.
16. Science cannot answer everything. Some areas can only be left to philosophy. Science will take a lot of time to establish the theory of our true nature and by then, the world may not exist as we know it.
17. Facts are needed for science where the search is about the physical. In literature, philosophy, spirituality and humanism, no evidence is needed as the search is to improve one's life and seek higher levels of consciousness.

## Hinduism

1. Although Hinduism appears to be polytheistic, it is actually monotheistic, pantheistic and beyond established definitions. There are numerous representations or forms of the one true divine, of the one reality that defines the core in us. Our senses, our mind and our logic on their own are unable to comprehend this reality, this is why this reality is experienced in deep meditation. Meditation is a prayer where the mind is not present with mundane needs and wants. This reality within us is called the Brahman that can somewhat be described as uni-manifested, undefined, infinite, and whole.
2. Hinduism is a religion that is deeply rooted in the principle of *Karma* (Action) and *Dharma* (Natural law, duty and morality). All life is seen as equal and this enforces the practices of vegetarianism where possible, with deep respect for nature. God is represented in numerous ways; however, there is one God. Om is the core representation of God and oneness. The religion is open to evolution through debates and discussion. Some notable texts such as the *Upanishads* and the *Gita* are transcriptions of spiritual/philosophical debates and discussions from enlightened masters.
3. Spirituality and Hindu philosophy is not concerned about what and who the Gods were, but rather, concerned about the messages they gave and how it will transform mankind to heightened states of consciousness. Indian philosophers and mystics agree that none of the books have been written by the Gods, but by very wise sages who were had reached the highest states of consciousness and were not interested in claiming authorship their publications. We do not fully know about the background of the actual authors of the Bhagavad *Gita* and the *Upanishads*. On a mythological level, it is said that the Gita has been written by *Ganesha*, but Ganesha is not an actual personality, but a symbolic representation of highest state of consciousness that man can achieve. The Ganesha that we see in pictures is an artists viewpoint of that symbolic representation. The Gods are actually states of consciousness. The avatars of Vishnu as

*Rama* and *Krishna* imply that they were human beings, however, *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Shiva* are stages in the transforming universe and carry symbolic meaning that we can't comprehend with our everyday mind and logic. Hinduism is an easy religion to follow, but to understand its deeper meaning would take a lot of time and meditation.

4. The concept of Dharma is the fragrance that has arisen from that 'silence', 'nothingness', 'wholeness' which defines you and me. The bee is lost without the fragrance that draws her towards the flower. Karma (selfless action) is not possible without Dharma.
5. All Hindu texts have been written by men, some are mantras and rituals (Rig Veda), philosophy (Gita and Upanishads), literature (*Puranas*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*), and most are in forms of poetry. Shiva is consciousness and Shakti is an artist's perception of energy that moves the universe. He (the concept of God) has been personified. Hinduism is based on the concept that God and universe are same. God is infinity, nothingness, wholeness, manifested and non-manifested at the same time. The Shiva that we see in pictures is a representation to the truth that is within.
6. The main motivation for vegetarianism is the non-violent philosophy that is central to this religion. The goal is to take violence out of man and vegetarianism is the beginning. Vegetarianism has been promoted in Hinduism but it has not been compulsory in the overall message of the main texts such as the Gita and the Upanishads. This is due to the fact that dietary requirements change according to the environment. A vegetarian will have difficulty to survive in extremely cold or dry environment.
7. *Devotion* (Bhakti Yoga) is not the fulfilment of mere rituals and traditions of which we don't understand the significance.



8. If you believe that only those of the Brahman caste can only conduct religious ceremonies, then subtly racism has been imposed to you through the caste system. Spirituality is beyond castes. It is sad that many Hindus still follow the caste system today. The caste system is the most misunderstood concept from Hinduism. The caste system is not a spiritual or religious order but a social one. *Vedanta* philosophy is the jewel of Hinduism and the caste system is its main weakness. The message of the Gita and Upanishads are not in favour of the caste system as all life is seen equal.
9. Krishna's life is symbolic. It signifies that everyone has the possibility to have the realisation that Krishna had. Krishna is multidimensional. He is the master in the science of action (Karma) and the science of impermanence and the highest possibility that man can reach.
10. The non-duality philosophy (Advaita Vedanta) views life as a complete whole where *Atman* ( individual Self ) and *Brahman* (universal Self, God ) are one. God is within us and it is not mandatory to visit the temple. Those who remove ignorance and ego will find God in themselves.
11. Everyone has the freedom to celebrate whether one lives in a hut or a mansion. The celebration is simple, just light a Diya or candle and witness the beauty of the flame. Witness the beauty of the light and silence within yourself. This witness in everyone is Diwali, the festival of lights. We are one.
12. The rivers and streams are part of life; this is why Hindus worship the river as goddess-mother *Ganges*. However, it is common to see people dispose all the household garbage in the rivers and streams in Fiji. There is little concern for life, the environment and even religion. A visit to the temple alone is not devotion or religiousness. The love for nature forms the core of Hindu religion.

13. *Ram* and *Ravan* are within us. The goal of religion is to overcome the *Ravan* and become *Ram*.
14. In a conventional Hindu prayer ceremony, the *pundit* (*priest*) recites mantras with certain rituals that are offered to some of the Gods. Everyone bows their heads and then the *Katha* (spiritual story) follows where the theme is usually about *fear* of the Gods and to follow rituals. To get freed from the ill omens, one has to perform some ritualistic prayer and give alms to the *Pundit*. In any case, the *Pundit* benefits by imposing fear through the stories and benefits through a follow up prayer where the alms are presented. The mantras are in Sanskrit and the significance and the meaning is not usually explained. The true message of the mantras get lost and there is no spiritual transformation of the devotees through these prayers. Therefore, these types of ceremonies become cultural and traditional practices, not spiritual practises that bring a positive transformation.
15. In the last millennia, scholars with selfish and political interests altered the sacred Hindu book called *Manusmriti*<sup>47</sup> which turned to give women less rights in order to be controlled in a male dominated society. The ancient Hindu Vedic culture had equal rights for women. There are several known women writers in the *Vedas*<sup>48</sup>. This shows that women those days were engaging in art, literature and philosophy and were educated. The representation of God is not restricted to male forms in the Hindu religion. In the Hindu philosophy, every living being is equal which includes men, women and even the animals. There has also been much respect given to the homosexuals throughout history in the Hindu society. There is more respect for animals in this culture when compared to western cultures; this is why vegetarianism is enforced.

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47. Ancient text of Hinduism that has controversial elements that are debated by scholars: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manusm%E1%B9%9Bti>

48. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rishi>

The Gita and the Upanishads are the central books of Hinduism.

16. Freedom from the ego is an ancient religious concept from India (Sanatan Dharma) and one needs to stop being identified with religion to experience that true freedom.
17. Karma (Action) on its own cannot lead to Moksha. The transformation within will lead to Moksha. One can help the world, but the ego can still remain. Karma Yoga (Selfless Action) is the fragrance from Dharma (Deep Spiritual Knowledge). The Bhagavad Gita has emphasis on Karma, but the philosophy does not end there. It continues with Astavakra Gita<sup>49</sup> and other scriptures.
18. Dharma drives the wheels of the cart on the path of Gyan (Wisdom), Bhakti (Devotion) and Karma (Action) which are interdependent with each other.
19. The background of spiritual seekers is important and it will determine the spiritual path. Hinduism Jainism and Buddhism certainly appeals to educated spiritual seekers who seek and wish to expand their knowledge and question to find the truth. Those who are born as Hindus and are not so educated or don't have the inner search can easily convert to other religions and there is nothing wrong with that approach. Hinduism does not survive with numbers, but with its philosophy and freedom. It is common for the educated western seekers to take the path of Hinduism and Buddhism. It is also common for some Hindus who do not have time and energy to learn about their religion convert to other religions where one just has to blindly follow instructions without questioning. There is nothing wrong in religious conversions as long as it is not forced and there is religious freedom.

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49. Central text of Vedanta:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra\\_Gita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra_Gita)

## Life and Society

1. Accept the world. Accept that there is violence in nature and there is selfishness and ignorance in human beings. Accept the world as it is but do not agree to it. Your disagreement with the self-centred world will create a new revolution and this revolution is needed for a change.
2. There can be many definitions of many things including those of love and God. Life is its intellectual evolution gives us the choice to reason and stand beside one such definition that appeals to us, that defines us, that helps us in eliminating the restlessness in oneself and in others. Stand by the definition that brings harmony and a positive transformation will happen in you.
3. The journey of life is amazing. With time and experience, your consciousness rises and you tend to drift away from old friends as you don't relate to them any-more. There are only a few who accept the changes in you. With evolutionary randomness and spiritual connectivity, you find new group of friends and it goes on. This evolution is natural and there is nothing wrong with it.
4. People are jealous of your success because they cannot achieve what you have achieved. They realise their weakness and failure and are upset at themselves. It just feels that they are upset with you. People will impose their failures onto you. Do what you love doing and just keep on flowing. The river eventually meets the ocean. Their jealousy is a proof of your excellence.
5. There is no devil other than the mind. There is no hell other than the suffering here on earth. There is no God other than life itself.
6. Your definition of God and Love will change as your level of consciousness rises.

7. Life becomes much easier when you are aware that you can inspire and motivate, but cannot control the lives of others.
8. Life blossoms with change; this is why we get bored from a stagnant environment. Learn, progress and move on.
9. You are getting wiser as you become aware of much you don't know.
10. Relationships have natural bonds that hold us together. If the bond wears out with time, don't try and force yourself. When the minds imposes and mends the relationship, the bond will become unnatural.
11. The institution of marriage is a social order to legitimate procreation. In many cases, it begins with love and celebration and with time crumbles like an old leaf. This institution injects psychological weaknesses such as fear, possessiveness and insecurity in the offspring. The cycle continues for centuries and religions support it.
12. One can know almost everything on life and the world with Google and related Internet search engines, but to live and experience it is another phenomenon.
13. Leadership without any spiritual awareness does not work. This is why the world is in a mess.
14. Being *modern* has nothing to do with clothes or fashion. In some aspects, fashion is a social order where one tries to get accepted by the society and in return spends for material wants that are not needed. This includes brand names that are psychologically imposed through advertisements in the media. Being modern actually means being free from what others expect from you and to climb up the ladder of higher consciousness. Don't get '*ripped off*' in the name of fashion. Don't be a slave of the society. Don't let others judge you.

15. If you feel that you are regularly stressed, cannot manage your anger and are getting out of control; then there is certainly a problem in your lifestyle. You are ignoring the voice that comes from within and dragged in the noise outside. Ask yourself how much time in a day you spend for yourself?
16. If you are looking for '*that perfect one*', ask yourself if you are perfect. Nature itself survives with its beauty of flaws.
17. Wealth is not just measured in terms of money. It is measured in terms of knowledge and wisdom, personality and special attributes such as compassion and kindness.
18. I define today's capitalism as a legal daylight robbery of the rich from the poor man's bank and using democracy to justify it.
19. Hope and faith keeps us going, but don't get too dependable on them.
20. Lust, attachment and love seem to be entangled in each other, however, they are on different levels. Lust is on the bodily level, attachment is on the emotional level and Love is on the spiritual level. Attachment easily gets entangled with emotions and expectations; when unfulfilled, it leads to dissatisfaction and anger. Love is selfless; a flower that will blossom and wither as it wishes.
21. Some nourish their ego with the achievement of others. Some do from their own achievements and some by the status they are born in the society.
22. Self-destruction is when one becomes a slave to their desires.
23. Nothing lasts forever. Joy and sadness are the forces of nature that eventually win over each other.

24. The children of the information age grow up with violent video games, toys, music, sexual videos and songs that contain abusive lyrics that are mostly influenced from today's popular culture. The education system is not so comprehensive to balance this rage and cultivate a future with elevated human consciousness. The education system needs to be revised.
25. People keep on chasing fame, power and money and fail to realize that true happiness is in the *now*. The chase makes one restless and incomplete.
26. People confuse attachment, emotions and lust for love. Love is there when one is selfless and disappears with the ego and selfishness.
27. In time, we shall learn, this world is not for us to possess. In time, we shall become detached and free.
28. The weakness of human beings is the urge to give permanence to all things that are temporary. Love, happiness, age, body, desires and life itself, is temporary. All is subject to change. The wise watch the processes in nature without being entangled in them.
29. There are bad people in the society, but on the other hand, there are wise and nice people as well; who are down to earth and give help unconditionally. It's a balance of nature, and you don't have to get upset with the bad side of things. Accept life, accept the bad, however, do not agree to it. In this way, the good will naturally flourish around you.
30. An official day of the celebration of love should be marked on the calendar. Love is not just mere romance between a boy and girl but a force that holds humanity.
31. The '*you are mine*' attitude is the problem in many relationships. Even our body is not ours, it weathers with time.

32. Death is part of life. It is not a negative phenomenon. Death is the cessation of the physical body and the transformation of consciousness.
33. The science and logic that governs us all our lives falls short to explain the real cause of death. Health, wealth, knowledge, power and fame become so tiny in front of the gate of death.
34. The mundane world is like dry sand; the more you hold to it, the more it will slip away. The trick is to develop a non-serious nature. Love everyone but hang out with those who accept and understand you. Make your work a hobby and hobby as your work. Keep low expectations from others. Accept life and the nature of change. Don't judge and be judged. Seek motivation from within and enjoy the mundane wealth rather than just accumulating it and becoming hunchbacked with its weight.
35. Romantic love is nature's trick for sustainability of the human race through procreation. People often blame their relationships when romance does not last long. With time, romance will wither away and love and understanding will remain for the journey ahead. If understanding is not there, love will wither as well.
36. Don't let your ego control you. Become a slave to the love and the laughter that flows from within.
37. In the beginning of a relationship, there is physical attraction, which is a basic instinct used by nature for procreation. This will be revealed through emotions such as romance, fear, jealousy and possessiveness. With time, the physical level of attraction will wear out and psychological attraction will then move the canoe ahead. Afterwards, spiritual attraction will move the canoe to the ocean where there is liberation.
38. If wealth is measured in terms of knowledge and humility: with this measurement, some billionaires may be seen very poor and some of the poor may be billionaires.



39. In fulfilling the hunger of the body, one forgets about the thirst of the spirit.
40. 'Duty' is a construct of the mind. 'Marriage' is a construct of the society. Making *love* a *duty* is like holding water in your fist. Love can make be never to captured in a legal contract. Love blossoms from within and suffocates when made a duty.
41. The problem is not with capitalism, but with selfishness. Its just that capitalism has been used to systematically promote selfishness.
42. Poverty is natural in a capitalist society where few smart wolves prey on the herds of sheep and call it democracy which they sustain with fear from terrorism and addiction to consumerism.
43. Energy is neither created nor destroyed. Wealth is a form of that energy that moves the world around. One country/person is getting extremely wealthy and the other extremely poor.
44. When we realise our true potential, life becomes a blessing and success is inevitable.
45. There is a fine line between justice and revenge. One makes you human, the other, animal.
46. Those who are weak psychological cannot freely give. True charity that is free from recognition requires immense strength. One does not necessarily need money to help others, a smile and a simple act of kindness is charity. Even a positive thought for others is charity.
47. There is violence when you go against the current of life. Violence can be subtle and psychological that leads to depression.

48. The view on what is '*right*' and '*wrong*' are states of mind that change when the level of consciousness rises.
49. Respect is earned through the nature of ones actions and behaviour. Respect is earned from a journey that requires strength of character, discipline and leadership that serves others selflessly.
50. Everyone can claim to be right and then there can be chaos. A set of moral guidelines is needed for the society whether from spiritual, religious or scientific books, a better guideline is needed.
51. Masculinity and femininity is part of the language, culture and history of mankind. If we want to see everyone as equal, then we need to stop labelling names and relate it to the orientation of the body. The mind has no orientation and it is language and culture that makes it masculine and feminine. I am looking for a term that describes one neither as male nor female or in between. A day will come, when language will be changed and any such reference to the person will be offensive.
52. Success in life on a spiritual level is not measured by how much wealth one has accumulated, but rather on how much time and effort one has spent in serving others selflessly.
53. I am not against art and creativity, but rather, against how it has been used by the corporations to give a false psychological construct in the society that tends to make a self identification with *fashion* and judges everyone on physical appearance rather than humanity in their thought process and its application.

54. *Note to atheists:* There is nothing wrong if someone has faith in God. Faith is not about politics of religion, there are many religions, however, God is one. Those who seek get the blessing as they turn towards themselves - within - realize their potential in the process. This does not harm anyone and should not be seen as negative.
55. We only see our reflection in a pond. Our reflection depends on the water and several other properties. A poem is the pond and the reflection is your perception of life.
56. It does not matter what our beliefs are, it matters what we do with our beliefs, how we improve/transform our lives and that our others. Either as theists, atheists or agnostics, one can be a good human being.
57. *Holi, the festival of colours:* Life can be better described by a vibrant play of colours. colours are limited to our eyesight, that actually are expressions of the stream of energy that forms the physical universe and supports life. This is the essence. Blend in the colours and become part the Holi festival. We all have different forms of colours within ourselves, blend with each other and become part of life.
58. The people you love the most can hurt you the most as *love* and *hatred* are fruits of the same tree. At times the fruit is sweet and at times it is bitter. According to the circumstances, the tree grows. It struggles in a cyclone, thirsts in drought and shivers in winter. The source of its energy is the same and channelled in different ways with expressions that hurt and heal.
59. I can use history, psychology, philosophy and science to debug the superstition in your belief system. Only then, your faith will get stronger and you will reach the truth.
60. At times it is difficult to climb the hill, at times some hills are too steep, however, on the other side of the

hill, there is a slope with which you will gain momentum to reach your dreams.

61. I have faith in the concept of God and I call myself a spiritual atheist who is free from the brainwashing by any organised or institution-based religions. I view religion and politics as part of the same system of conditioning that has dragged mankind to chaos.
62. Since enough damage has been done in its name, I don't think that religion should be respected, but challenged scientifically and philosophically. This is due to the fact that we are in a multi-religious world where food for someone can be poison for the other. Your belief systems can be dangerous and violent to mine and therefore everything should be laid on the discussion table of reason.
63. There needs to be a balance between pessimism and optimism. A positive mindset does not actually mean that one has to ignore one's weakness, but become aware of it and know how to get over it.
64. Those who are free is a bigger threat to the society than those who have been locked away. We live in a society of evil minds disguised as good.
65. As in the case of the society, the society with a positive mindset and freedom should be aware of some evil minds. Even in the most developed societies, cases of rape and sexual abuse exist. Although there are equal rights and freedom, one should be aware while moving alone in the dark. Women should not take risks and be cautious of what they wear and their drinking patterns and whereabouts at night. It is common to hear about violent sexual abuses and everyone should take measures to protect themselves.
66. Leaving a plant on its own in the desert does not mean that it will survive on its own, one has to water it regularly.

67. We have the choice to either watch from the distance and complain or plead to God about the drought, or work towards in helping to water the plant.
68. Nationalism is a disease. This disease divides people and makes us support governments who have their own agenda to maintain power by imposing fears and offer of protection.
69. In the spiritual path, the individual ego will transform into a communal ego and then your identity will become that of the community and their pain and joy will be of your own.
70. Racism is a human weakness and is not necessarily a distinguished property from a culture or race. It is a product of inferiority complex and to gain superiority, a group will judge others to due their skin.
71. Alcohol is an escape tool. At times it is used for relaxation and often those who are not mature can get into problems. There are other addictive products such as cigarettes, Kava, drugs and some soft drinks with high sugar and caffeine content that lets you escape for a moment. They make you assume that the problems will get solved, however, the side-effects will actually make the problem worse. Meditation empowers one to become their true nature and gives an internal strength and one does not need to escape the present any more. Being with yourself is part of meditation.
72. Religious activities of today are generally good for social gathering and community work, however, they cannot give one a spiritual transformation which is dependent on the seeker who walks alone in the spiritual path. Spirituality eventually becomes a personal journey.
73. In democracy, everyone should not be given the right to vote and if given, some form of weighting in the vote should be introduced. A high weighting to votes should be given to those who make contribution to society,

those who have gone through good education and can make better decisions. An aptitude test in leadership and politics can also be useful in screening voters. Currently, all votes have the same weight even if some voters are not aware about whom and what they are voting.

74. Failures and obstacles in life are important. They will enable you to become stronger.
75. Religion enforces marriage that sexually suppresses the society. Couple's who are married for long and don't find each other attractive are forced to stay with each other through social and religious concepts. That can create violence and suppression and at times can have perverted sexual behaviour.
76. Atheists can also be spiritual, if they get out of their ego of science and materialism and practice humility. Devotion does not necessarily need God, an atheist can also be devoted.
77. Failure and struggle will itself become the gurus that will triumph. Only if you become a witness of them, not a slave.
78. You don't need to love someone to be complete. Love is within you, only you can complete yourself.
79. There is a beam of light even in the darkness that covers the streets and the moonlight. That beam can transform your loneliness into aloneness.
80. An education system can give information, however, the flower of intelligence blossoms with realisation and awareness. Wisdom is not an entity of the mind, but a voice from the soul that is heard when one breaks free from the mind that is clouded with ignorance. One has transcendent their limiting mind with humane/spiritual knowledge and meditation.

81. After a long day in the sun, we accumulate dust and sweat on our body. After a shower, we sit fresh and have some tea and although our body is tired, there is silence and peace. The dust and sweat are the emotions and attachments that control our lives and blur our vision. The spiritual path leads to the fountain that cleanses the mind and the dirt it has accumulated, the pain and fears. We can become the seed that had once sprouted, fresh. Meditate and be at peace.
82. Dharma drives the wheels of the cart on the path of Gyan (wisdom), Bhakti (devotion) and Karma (action) which are interdependent with each other.
83. There is nothing to achieve in spiritual path other than self realisation. The path is about losing one's acquired possessions that also includes intense attachments to people and about losing the ego in the end.
84. If the light of truth is in you, you don't need to change yourself, keep changing the world and that is Karma.

## About the Author

Dr. Rohitash Chandra is a Computer Scientist from Fiji whose research focus is in the areas of Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and Medical Informatics. He has currently published thirty five scientific papers from his research in leading journals and conference proceedings that have been mostly published by IEEE, Springer and Elsevier. He holds a PhD in Computer Science from Victoria University of Wellington. Rohitash is the founder and President of Software Foundation Fiji which is a non-profit organisation that promotes software and technology in Fiji. He is a Lecturer in Computer Science at the University of the South Pacific.

Rohitash has keen interest in Comparative Religion, Literature and Spirituality. He has been studying ancient Indian poetry and philosophy which have been the motivating factors behind the themes of his works in literature. He has published an earlier poetry collection called “A Hot Pot of Roasted Poems” in 2007. He has been the Editor of Blue Fog Journal that has been promoting art and literature from the South Pacific. He has edited two major poetry collections, “Namaste Fiji: An International Anthology of Poetry” and “Collection of Contemporary Love Poems”. His hobbies include films, drama, fine arts and photography.

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