



New Beginnings



For many, January first has become associated with the New Year's resolution. We think of all the ways life could be different and we try to impose these changes upon ourselves. We are lead to believe that somehow losing 10 pounds or quitting some habit will create a more fulfilling life. These resolutions are mostly to do with physical changes, changing the outer appearance so somehow the whole will be altered.

Does this really work? How many people have lost weight or won a lottery to find that they are thinner or richer and yet life still has its problems? Maybe the problems have changed, but there are still problems. The dream of perfection becomes just that, a dream. All life situations have their positive and negative aspects. O.K. you may ask if that doesn't work, what does? Who is behind all the changing? What are you really seeking? Who is even asking the question?

The source of your life is you. Like in the child's game of tag, **you are it**. In eastern philosophies, life situations are seen as a play "lila" or "samsara". So what is behind the play? How do we find out? Where do we begin?

The answer is simple: it is to sit quietly with no agenda. Allow all the outer trappings of life to fall away and see who is behind the role you are playing in your life. You may even have more than one role trying to be all things to all the different people in your life. It does not matter. All you do is sit in silence. Let go of the external world. Close your eyes. Rest in that deep silence.

In the early 1900's, Ramana was an Indian youth who had an awakening. This led him to Arunachula, a holy mountain in Southern India. He spent many years in silence and meditation, discovering his true nature. Later people saw his peace and asked for his assistance. Being compassionate himself, he offered suggestions to assist them and became a teacher or guru. Now he is revered as a saint.

Ramana was someone who discovered a way to know who we are. When the mind with its incessant chatter begins, he suggested that, as you sit in silence, ask inwardly "Who am I?" If a focus is needed, simply ask that question. Alternately, you could just be quiet and sit. There are many traditions that suggest silent retreat. In the past, I had my doubts about such practices. After visiting Arunachula on retreat, I know that in that deep, beautiful silence the truth of our being is revealed. It was always there. We simply were too busy to notice. With ten thousand things on our to do list, we could barely find time to relax let alone explore our true nature. Being busy is the mind's way of

accomplishing in the world. Doing things, even reading spiritual books, doing special poses or breathing exercises are still "doings". What is behind all the doings?

This year, I want to suggest something radical for a New Year's resolution. Take the time every day to do nothing for five minutes at first, then ten minutes. Rest. Relax. Notice how the mind wants to jump in and say, "That is not good. Doing nothing is bad, bad, bad." If this happens, thank the mind for its opinion, but let it know you are going to sit anyways and now it can rest. Eventually when you feel ready, sit silently with your eyes closed. Your mind may still take awhile to let go of thoughts. That is alright. Watch them like clouds floating in the sky. Pay no more or less attention to them than that, as they go by. Sometimes focusing your attention in the heart area is useful. Be gentle with yourself as you deepen into this practice. You may also inwardly ask yourself the question, "Who am I?" This was Ramana's way of helping people find their truth. If you like it, use it. If not, just sit in the silence.

You may find that you are not what you thought you were. Let this practice create a new beginning for yourself in which you tap into the unlimited possibilities of life every moment. New opportunities abound when the heart is unburdened by the past and you discover in the moment who you truly are as pure potential. Free from self-limiting thoughts, you can then create the world of your dreams and make it your reality.

Sitting

Finding space to be in Stillness
Life passes through
Like a breeze
Awed by simplicity
And richness
Life without end is...
Flowing

The Eternal Dance.

In this fleeting moment I touch heaven
As my feet leap from Earth.
In that moment I feel lightness
within my body
And know that the past burdens of my life,
Can touch me no more.
I am the dancer of life dancing my song
Leaping for joy, for release, for freedom.
The Dance is the Doorway...
My body the instrument.
In this moment I am Free.
I have become one with that which is
Nameless and Eternal

Cynthia Vangolen is honoured to share insights with those exploring the nature of who we truly are. She offers private consultations, meditations, and energy awareness groups. With 20 years of experience as an intuitive counsellor, she understands there can be bumps on the road or even the need for a change in direction. For more information call **604 657-3465**.

