

FOOD

Nourishing Body, Mind & Soul

YOGA[®]

PAUL RODNEY TURNER
The Food Yogi

SAMPLE

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*To my gurus, who taught me:
Spiritual evolution begins with mastering the tongue.*

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THE SONG OF THE FOOD YOGI

As the soft moist grass folds beneath my feet,
I contemplate my good fortune and beg not to repeat,
The failures of the past in a journey so long,
There's just too much to tell in this very short song.
Holding my hands high, I reach for the sky,
personal liberation – I will not be denied,
By acting in ways that are averse to the course,
of the powerful waves – of that Illusory force.
I am far from perfect – and yet I feel so blessed,
by the saints that walked before me with egos undressed.
They now illuminate my path and guide my sorry plight,
in a world so overtaken by the fear of night.
Getting strength and vitality from the sun, water and air,
I embrace the divine love of the elemental fair,
as they nourish the teachings of the FOOD YOGA path,
and lead one and all to the Lord Jagannath.
The “Lord of the Universe,” manifest within –
every atom of life and every tube-torus spin,
There is nowhere in our existence that God cannot be seen,
and that is essentially what FOOD YOGA means.
So honor your SELF – by honoring that Lord,
See thy presence manifest – in total accord,
with the degree of your love and openness of your heart,
And that my dear friend is where spirituality starts.
So engage your tongue properly – in respectable ways,
Don't chatter, offend – or eat horrible things today,
Purify the vibration – and the taste on your buds,
and experience the divine presence manifest from the mud,
Of a mischievous mind – submerged for far too long,
in matters of ignorance and sad love songs,
Realize your potential – beginning with your tongue,
and open your heart to the love of the divine ONE.

- The Food Yogi

INTRODUCTION

Our task must be to free ourselves... widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty. – Albert Einstein.

Just like humans, animals feel pain. Granted, they may not have the intelligence to build a skyscraper, but they do have intelligence, emotions, and are living, breathing, and conscious beings just like we are. Indeed, all things, from insects, to plants, aquatics, and the innumerable single cell organisms that exist everywhere are alive with purpose.

The engine of life is linkage. Everything is linked. Nothing is truly self-sufficient. Just as water and air are inseparable, so too is the interdependence of all living things. We are all united in life for our survival on Earth. Sharing is everything.

This recognition of the oneness of all life is the basis of a truly humane society.

The HOME documentary² sums it up this way: “Earth relies on a balance in which every being has a role to play, and exists only through the existence of another being – a subtle, fragile harmony that is easily shattered.”

It is the acknowledgement of this interdependence and the need for balance and gratitude that is central to *FOOD YOGA – Nourishing Body, Mind & Soul*.

Our journey begins in the domain of molecular science and quantum physics and establishes the fact that food, like everything in this world, is essentially just another form of energy.

However this awareness often eludes us humans because we are either too busy consuming food to bother; or we lack the heightened level of sensory perception necessary to notice. This is no more clearly evident than in our embarrassingly poor perception of the electromagnetic spectrum.

Like food, our thoughts are also a form of energy, and therefore they can influence the food we consume, much like conflicting radio waves may scramble a clear signal. When we care more about this powerful influence on our food we will think twice about where we buy our food or where we eat out.

Drawing on numerous mystic traditions, including that of the American Indian, we venture into the esoteric realms of nature spirits and the key role they play in the interplay of energy. This path reveals the sacredness of water and the *pivotal role* it plays in solving the riddle of how to reconnect to our Source.

Although we may not be of this world in spirit, we are certainly bound to it through flesh and the body’s concomitant needs. So our journey must, somewhat begrudgingly, take a slight detour to the mundane world of food politics, but makes a strong case for growing our own.

Returning to the central theme of *FOOD YOGA*, we look at the nature of our true self and how we are not only surrounded by energy, but are in essence energetic beings all earnestly seeking the same things: harmony and love.

² *Home* is a 2009 documentary by Yann Arthus-Bertrand. The film is almost entirely composed of aerial shots of various places on Earth. It shows the diversity of life on Earth and how humanity is threatening the ecological balance of the planet.

Having set the framework, we take a deep look at the yoga tradition and how it can help us prosper in body, mind *and* spirit. Yoga is all about connection, but it begins with managing the mind and senses, of which the tongue is the *most* important. How we use our tongues, therefore, is a critical piece of the puzzle.

Since eating is one of the two main functions of the tongue, and so central to our survival, it is logically one of the *most effective* mediums for initiating change in consciousness. Each of us has had the experience of sitting down to a meal cooked with love and felt an immediate transformation of consciousness followed by a feeling of reciprocal love for the person who prepared the meal. The fact is, when food is prepared with loving intention it can communicate in any language. Such food has the ability to break down barriers and turn anger into love, fear into trust, and ignorance into enlightenment. This is no more evident than in the loving exchange between a mother and child.

Unfortunately, although our bodies are hardwired to enjoy eating good food, we often seem bored while eating, distracting ourselves with television, cell phones or the Internet. Even when we are full, we feel unsatisfied and reach for more. American food historian Harvey Levenstein suggests that because of the sheer abundance of food choices in America, there exists a “vague indifference to food, manifested in a tendency to eat and run, rather than to dine and savor.”

In *FOOD YOGA* the case is made that if we make the effort to focus on this very essential part of our lives – eating – incredible and transformative things can happen to us. Biodynamic Guru, Peter Proctor, believes quality food helps people make moral decisions and have moral thoughts – “It’s not just stuff to fill your stomach. It actually gives you a real quality of thought and you realize that this is what the world needs.”³

When you are living consciously, beginning with conscious eating, you will do so in all your thoughts and actions. Your life will be consistent and in harmony with your environment. In other words, you will compliment your environment and not disturb it. Rather than being a “spoke in the wheel” of Nature, you will be a welcome participant in the garden of unlimited possibility.

Food is the most basic necessity of life. Its only purpose is to nourish the body, mind and soul. Food, therefore, should give us life, cleanse our body and uplift our spirit. Eating food should never be just about fueling the physical body. As Michael Pollan suggests in his book, *In Defense of Food*, “That eating should be foremost about bodily health is a relatively new, and I think, destructive idea – destructive not just of the pleasure of eating, which would be bad enough, but paradoxically of our health as well.”

In this context, Pollan specifically refers to the poor health of Americans who are seemingly obsessed with the nutritional content of food at the expense of common sense and happiness. In *FOOD YOGA* we will explore how a more inclusive and respectful attitude toward food and its origins can improve the overall health of your body, mind *and* soul.

According to all yoga traditions, food that is old, decomposed and consisting of dead flesh will pollute the body and consciousness, while food that is fresh, nutritious and free of any suffering will enrich the body, cleanse the mind and satisfy the soul.

³ Documentary film (2010): *One Man, One Cow, One Planet*

The *Bhagavad-gita*⁴ states that all foods can be classified according to their inherent quality and the way they affect our body and mind.

*Foods characterized by goodness increase the duration of life, purify one's existence and give strength, health, happiness and satisfaction. Such nourishing foods are sweet, juicy, fattening and palatable.*⁵

*Passionate people like foods that are too bitter, too sour, salty, pungent, dry and hot. Such foods cause pain, distress, and disease.*⁶

*Food cooked more than three hours before being eaten, which is tasteless, stale, putrid, decomposed and unclean, is food liked by unenlightened people.*⁷

Foods liked by unenlightened people are essentially those foods that are decomposing and impure. As may be guessed, meat and fish are foods belonging to this lower mode and therefore should be avoided if one truly desires enlightenment and the most sacred connection to the natural world.

Jeremy Rifkin, in his eye-opening chronicling of the meat industry⁸ concurs that eating, more than any other single experience, brings us into a full relationship with the natural world.

The act itself calls forth the full embodiment of our senses—taste, smell, touch, hearing, and sight. We know nature largely by the various ways we consume it. Eating establishes the most primordial of all human bonds with the environment, and that is why in most cultures the experience is celebrated as a sacred act and a communion as well as an act of survival and replenishment. Eating, then, is the bridge that connects culture with nature, the social order with the natural order.

Professor Anne Murcott⁹ adds, “Food is an especially appropriate ‘mediator’ because when we eat we establish, in a literal sense, a direct identity between ourselves (culture) and our food (nature).”

In FOOD YOGA we take this concept even further to the point of seeing food as the ultimate peacemaker among all men, animals, and the environment.

If we humans honestly recognized the equality of all beings, the collective result would be a desire to share the bounty of the earth and forego all selfish tendencies. The fact that humans do not acknowledge this equality (especially world leaders) is clearly evident in the case of world hunger. “*The problem is not insufficient food production, but inequitable distribution,*” explained UN secretary general, Dr. Kay Killingsworth¹⁰.

⁴ *Bhagavad-gita* is a Vedantic scripture comprising the instructions given by Sri Krishna to Arjuna during the Kurukshetra War. It appears as part of the *Mahabharata*.

⁵ *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* (17.8) edited for clarity.

⁶ *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* (17.9) edited for clarity.

⁷ *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* (17.10) edited for clarity.

⁸ *Beyond Beef, the rise and fall of the cattle industry*, Jeremy Rifkin.

⁹ *The cultural significance of food and eating*. Proceedings of the Nutrition Society (1982), 41: 203-210 Cambridge University Press.

¹⁰ United Nations World Food Summit, Rome 1996.

Killingsworth made that comment in 1996 and yet here we are in 2012 and world hunger continues to haunt the UN and their Millennium Development Goals (MDG), even though world food production has increased exponentially. How is this possible? I believe the issue is not only inequitable distribution, but also horrendously biased economic policies. For example, can anyone of right mind honestly justify why **35.5% of all grain production in the world is fed to livestock** and not humans?¹¹ This figure is alarming when we consider that on average, one child dies every five seconds as a result, either directly or indirectly, of hunger – 700 every hour – 16,000 each day - 6 million each year – 60% of all child deaths.¹² In 2012 there should be no hunger whatsoever.

I wonder how many burger-eating Americans and Europeans realize that the majority of this grain is fed to beef cattle grazing on deforested Amazonian lands? According to the FAO¹³, the factory farming of animals is *the most* inefficient and environmentally damaging industry in the modern world.

Of course, world hunger is a very complex problem, but without doubt, if humans learned to look past racial, religious, ethnic and species differences, there would be no scarcity anywhere in the world. What one entity lacked in its ability to sustain itself, another could contribute through free knowledge, labor exchange, or bartering. It is the symbiotic relationship formed between humans, animals, insects, plants, birds, and fish that have enabled all species to survive throughout the ages.

Unfortunately, the modern capitalist system breeds greed and dishonesty and thus stands in the way of a conscious, sustainable society. Such an ideal society would consist of, what I call *food yogis* or responsible humans that serve, consume, and behave in ways that respect all of creation and help maintain the delicate balance of nature.

Food yogis respect their own body, which they treat as a blessing or a “temple of God.” Indeed, they live their entire life in full awareness of their interdependence and interconnectedness to all things. Such a spiritual and all embracing perspective is the foundation of India’s *Vedic* culture of hospitality – a culture that is based on the principle of *sama darshana*¹⁴ or spiritual equality.

The *food yogi* fully embraces a socially responsible and environmentally respectful lifestyle. This applies to your choice of food, clothing, cosmetics, cleaning materials and habitat. All should be chosen carefully so that the least amount of harm is inflicted upon your environment and other living things.

This journey in raising consciousness begins with and ends with the tongue. Never underestimate the power of the plate or the power of the spoken word. What you put on your plate is as much a political statement as it is a mirror of who you really are. You can tell much about a person by what comes out of their mouth when they speak and what they consume as food. Food for Life¹⁵ founder Srila Prabhupada¹⁶ often gave the example of a dog on a throne. “If

¹¹ United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). 2007. Production, Supply & Distribution Online Database. USDA: Washington, D.C. Available online at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/psdonline/>.

¹² Human Rights Council. “Resolution 7/14. *The right to food*”. United Nations, March 27, 2008, p. 3.

¹³ FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

¹⁴ Sanskrit: *sama*: sameness; *darshinah*: to see.

¹⁵ World’s largest plant-based food relief organization. Further reading in Appendix.

¹⁶ A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, the founder acharya of ISKCON and scholar who translated and commented on numerous Vedic scriptures.

you throw a shoe, then the dog will leave his throne to chew the shoe,” he chuckled. Similarly, although an individual may claim to be enlightened or a great moralist, actions speak louder than words, and soon enough those actions will always reveal their true nature.

The Bible says: “The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.”¹⁷

The tongue will always lead the other senses either to purity and thus liberation, or to debauchery and thus perpetual entanglement in sin.

In this spirit, *FOOD YOGA* provides a *Food Offering Meditation* that encapsulates the core lessons learned along the journey, while also respecting the need for the individual to be able to use this meditation within the context of their preferred spiritual tradition. *FOOD YOGA* aims to do this by teaching universally accepted principles of science and spirituality and not dogma.

In *FOOD YOGA*, I also share my personal experiences as a young monk and student of India’s Vedic culture of hospitality, while also drawing from numerous scientific and religious sources to provide a believable framework to elevate the act of eating from the shackles of the mundane to the liberating embrace of the transcendental.

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¹⁷ Proverbs 15:4 NIV.

FOOD YOGA

*He who loves with purity considers not the gift of the lover, but the love of the giver. – Thomas Kempis*¹⁸

Rooted in Hindu tradition, the spiritual dimension of food yoga has meaning for people of all faiths. In Hinduism, all food is first offered to God – the very source of that food’s creation. Such offerings can be elaborate rituals conducted with great fanfare using expensive paraphernalia and food ingredients, while other offerings may be humble gestures consisting of no more than fresh fruits and water. In all cases, however, it is the intention or the devotion of the aspirant that is foremost. Such offered food is considered pure, karma-free,¹⁹ and spiritually nourishing. Hindus call this food *prasadam*, or the mercy of God.

Hinduism is a complex and varied belief system that accepts many gods and goddesses as emanating from a single source, *Brahman*, which is understood either as an impersonal, formless energy, as in the *Advaita* tradition, or as a dual (male/female) god in the form of *Lakshmi-Vishnu*, *Radha-Krishna*, or *Shiva-Shakti*, as in *Dvaita* traditions.

To the naturalist, the Goddess is simply “Mother Earth.” After all, all food comes from the earth. Some currents of Neopaganism, in particular Wicca, have a concept of a single goddess and a single god who represent a united whole, glorified as the Lord and Lady (*Frey* and *Freya*, literally translated), with the Lord representing abundance and fertility and the Lady representing peace and love as well as vast powers of magic.

Whatever your belief, the fact that you are reading this book tells me that you may be open to accepting a higher power, and in your own unique way, you honor that higher presence.

My goal here is not to explore the entire subject of foodism, but rather to focus on its more divine aspects, beginning with an acceptance of a benevolent presence in our lives and evolving to appreciating that presence through the offering of pure food, much the same as when you honor a friend in your home. Giving food is the most fundamental act of kindness a human can do, and eating food is one of the few things *all* humans have in common.

Food yoga springs from the belief that the kind of food we eat affects our consciousness and subsequent behaviors. According to the *Bhagavad-gita*, *sattvic*²⁰ foods can be energetically purified by being offered in devotion, thereby raising one’s consciousness. For this reason, food yogis avoid foods saturated with fear and suffering, such as meat, fish, eggs and commercial dairy products,²¹ in favor of plant-based meals prepared with loving intention and made with fresh, organic ingredients. Moreover, if people prepare the food you eat with a polluted consciousness

¹⁸ Thomas à Kempis (ca.1380 – 25 July 1471) was a late Medieval Catholic monk and probable author of *The Imitation of Christ*, one of the best-known Christian books on devotion.

¹⁹ Free of any negative reaction resulting from impious behavior.

²⁰ *Sattvic*, Sanskrit word meaning purity. For an object or food to be *sattvic*, it must be physically and energetically pure and lead to clarity and equanimity of mind while also being beneficial to the body.

²¹ Unhomogenized and unpasteurized raw milk that comes from natural living, protected cows is considered to be in the mode of goodness.

(e.g., disgruntled employees working in a dirty restaurant kitchen), you are sure to absorb negative psychic energies.

That food should be prepared and served in its purest possible form is central to the belief and practice of Food for Life Global,²² a worldwide network of plant-based relief projects. Without adherence to this single principle, Food for Life Global would be no different than any other food relief agency. In fact, the non-profit sees itself more as a social change organization, with pure food as its preferred medium of expression.

At the root of all purity is an adherence to honesty and cleanliness, and both of these attributes can easily be applied to the food industry. The purest food for consumption is food that is energetically pure in *every* phase of its life cycle. When you look beyond the immediate gratification food offers and see food for what it truly is – energy – you tap into one of the greatest wonders of life and open the door to higher awareness.

All the world's great spiritual traditions have elaborate food offering rituals carefully designed to expand consciousness. From the Holy Eucharist to Passover to *Diwali*, Christmas, Thanksgiving, and even the mushroom ceremonies of the Shamanic traditions – all use food as a means to represent or please the Divine and to expand the consciousness of their followers.

Food yoga is, in essence, a discipline that honors all spiritual paths by embracing their core teaching – that food in its most pure form is *divine* and therefore an excellent medium for expressing our unconditional love and purifying our consciousness.

Food yoga is both an art form and a science.

ART: The individual expression of love and devotion using food as the medium;

SCIENCE: An appreciation for the beauty and interconnectedness of all things, coupled with an unceasing awareness of the Energetic Source from which all things emanate.

It's important to create a solid foundation for any belief system, and I propose we break things down to their most elementary level and start by looking at food as nothing more than energy. So let's begin our journey from the viewpoint of modern physics.

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²² www.ffl.org

It is interesting to note that in the description of creation as found in India's *Brahma Samhita*,²⁴ Lord Maha Vishnu, the source of thousands of avatars and the Creator of countless individual souls, reclines in the waters of the Causal Ocean²⁵ in a state of divine sleep, called *yoga-nidra* and *dreams* unlimited universes into existence.²⁶

English astronomer Sir James Jeans²⁷ offers the following explanation:

Today there is a wide measure of agreement, which on the physical side of science approaches almost to unanimity, that the stream of knowledge is heading towards a non-mechanical reality; the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine. Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter; we are beginning to suspect that we ought rather to hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter ...

Talbot describes this as the “melding of physics and mysticism.”

The power of observation

In 1927, German physicist Werner Heisenberg²⁸ presented his Uncertainty Principle and sparked a debate that to this day has not been resolved. Heisenberg stated that the observer alters the observed by the mere act of the observation.

The problem with observing the minute world of atoms, Heisenberg explained, is that “light profoundly affects them.” For example, you take for granted that this page in the book is as you observe it. However, the light reflecting off the page is altering it in a minute way, because in small systems like the interior of an atom, a photon of light actually knocks the particles about. Therefore, we can never pinpoint the exact location of any one particle, since the attempt to do so requires bombarding the particle with photons or light.

What does this mean in a practical sense? Simply that what one perceives, or one's version of reality, is *never* an absolute fact, because matter is constantly reshaping, and, by the mere act of observation, things change location. What happens on the subatomic level is far different to what we understand.

Talbot continues, “The discovery that matter is mainly composed of empty space is only the first of many discoveries to destroy the physicists' notions of solid objects on the atomic level.”

New Zealand physicist Ernest Rutherford's²⁹ experiments revealed that matter consists mainly of vast empty regions of space filled with energy in the form of particles or waves. “Depending on how we look at it, a subatomic entity displays the properties of both a particle and a wave,” explains Talbot.

²⁴ The *Brahma Samhita* is a Sanskrit *Pancaratra* text, composed of verses of prayer spoken by Brahma glorifying the supreme Lord Krishna or Govinda at the beginning of creation.

²⁵ The substance from which the material world is created. To initiate the material creation, Maha Vishnu glances at Material Nature, thus agitating her to begin expanding the material elements.

²⁶ *Brahma Samhita*: Verse 5.47.

²⁷ Sir James Hopwood Jeans OM FRS MA DSc ScD LLD (1877-1946) was an English physicist, astronomer and mathematician.

²⁸ Werner Heisenberg (1901-1976) was a German theoretical physicist who made foundational contributions to quantum mechanics.

²⁹ Ernest Rutherford, First Baron Rutherford of Nelson, OM, FRS (1871-1937) was a New Zealand chemist and physicist who became known as the father of nuclear physics.

Talbot then offers that with Heisenberg's proposal that physicists should simply accept the paradoxical aspect of subatomic entities and view them as waves/particles, Heisenberg was in essence "making a statement that belonged as much to mysticism as it did to the new physics," or that the nature of reality was "beyond verbal description."

While there is much we still don't understand about the universe, the most important concept to grasp is that everything is interconnected. For example, if we could freeze time just before the so-called "Big Bang," we would see that for a brief instant only one common energy existed. Everything in the universe emanated from that singular energetic event. Whether we accept that in the beginning, the universe was created by a great cataclysm, or by the seed of a pure sound, as in the name of God, it makes no difference because ultimately in both scenarios, energy is the clear impetus. Every tangible thing we experience in this universe, whether it be mountains, trees, insects, fish, animals, humans, planets, or galaxies, etc., are in essence different forms of the same stuff which stars are made of.

Interconnectedness

This became clearly apparent in 1967, when Pulsars were discovered. Pulsars are neutron stars that emit regular *pulses* of electromagnetic waves. They are formed from the explosion of supernovas³⁰, from which all elements of matter are derived. Inevitably, some of the matter from these supernova explosions is pulled into the earth's gravitational field. It's estimated that hundreds of millions of tons of such mineral-rich "stardust" falls onto the earth every year, and in one way or another, becomes the fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and grains we eat.

Everything in the universe shares an energetic familiarity. Therefore, like a domino effect, any change in this universal web of interconnectedness affects everything else. This interconnectedness explains our ability to influence the lives of others, and how thoughts affect food.

Thoughts and Emotions are Energy

People are starting to realize that thoughts are energy, too, and over the last two decades, we've seen an explosion of self-help books like *The Secret* by Robyn Byrne, all essentially stating one simple message: positive thinking leads to a more fulfilling life. "The first step to using the *Law of Attraction*," says Byrne, is "to clarify exactly what you want," because "thoughts are things." The vibration you radiate to the universe is comprised of your thoughts, emotions, and actions.

What you think about and the strength of the emotions you attach to that thing will either attract what *you want* or attract what you *don't want*. If you are constantly meditating on your past failures and poor health, you can expect more of the same. Conversely, if you focus your attention on health and prosperity, you can expect as such. In other words, your thoughts are literally writing the "screenplay" of your life.

Shakti Gawain, a pioneer in the field of personal development and the best-selling author of numerous books, including *Creative Visualization*, explains how to use mental imagery and affirmations to produce positive changes in one's life. Her book contains meditations and exercises to help practitioners channel their energies in positive directions. For example, she

³⁰ A supernova is a stellar explosion that is so luminous that the burst of radiation often briefly outshines an entire galaxy!

recommends having a regular creative visualization meditation period for fifteen minutes each morning upon arising, and each evening just before sleep, as these are the times when it is most effective. She suggests, “always starting your meditation periods with deep relaxation, then following with any visualizations or affirmations you wish.”

Not surprisingly, some of the world’s leading scientists in physics, biology, psychology and many other fields are starting to recognize the importance of thought energy. In fact, positive thought energy in the form of collective meditation has already been scientifically proven to reduce violent crime!

Intention experiment

In 1993, one of the world’s leading physicists proposed a study to determine if the focused meditation of a large group of participants in Transcendental Meditation® and TM-Sidhi could have an effect on Washington DC’s crime rate. The results were astonishing.

The official report from the Institute of Science Technology and Public Policy states:

Based on the results of the study, the steady state gain (long-term effect) associated with a permanent group of 4,000 participants in the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi programs was calculated as a 48% reduction in HRA crimes in the District of Columbia.

Given the strength of these results, their consistency with the positive results of previous research, the grave human and financial costs of violent crime, and the lack of other effective and scientific methods to reduce crime, policy makers are urged to apply this approach on a large scale for the benefit of society.³¹

This scientifically validated method of countering the criminal inclinations of a very large city proves beyond a doubt that thought, and specifically focused intention, is a form of energy that can affect the world around us.

Lynne McTaggart, author of *The Intention Experiment* documents hundreds of examples of the effects of group focused intention in scientifically controlled experiments.

Leaf glow

On March 11, 2007, McTaggart and her team carried out a test using the attendees of an Intention Experiment conference held by her publishing company in London. Her assistant Mark Boccuzzi, operating remotely, set up a webcam and live images of two geranium leaves to broadcast on their website, visible only to Lynne and her London audience. In order to achieve statistical significance, Lynn felt she needed more than thirty data points with which to compare the two leaves. Psychologist Dr. Gary Schwartz, director of the Center for Advances in Consciousness and Health, was asked to puncture each leaf sixteen times.

Although the participants would know the target leaf, the scientists would not be told until they’d calculated the results.

³¹ Reference: Hagelin, J.S., Rainforth, M.V., Orme-Johnson, D.W., Cavanaugh, K. L., Alexander, C.N., Shatkin, S.F., Davies, J.L, Hughes, A.O, and Ross, E. 1999. Effects of group practice of the Transcendental Meditation program on preventing violent crime in Washington D.C.: Results of the National Demonstration Project, June-July, 1993. Social Indicators Research, 47(2): 153-201.

A member of the audience was then asked to choose the target leaf by flipping a coin, at which time the chosen leaf was displayed on a projector. After engaging the audience in a simple “Powering Up” exercise, the group held a focused intention to make the leaf glow for 10 minutes.

The remote scientists were only told which leaf had been chosen after they’d finished their calculations. A week later, Dr. Schwartz revealed that the changes in the light emissions of the leaf given the glowing intention had been so strong that they could readily be seen in the digital images created by the CCD cameras.

Apparently, the increased biophoton effect was highly statistically significant and that, “all the punctured holes in the chosen leaf were filled with light.” All the holes in the control leaf, on the other hand, remained black.

Other Worlds

All the world’s spiritual traditions tell us that there are multiple dimensions existing right now in the world in which we live. Due to the limitation of our human senses, we are not able to perceive these other worlds, but it wasn’t always that way.

Many of us can attest that when we were children, we were able to perceive these other worlds. Whether this was the result of gullible innocence, purity, openness, or our senses being less frazzled by the modern lifestyle, it is hard to know for sure. But I can still remember the morning when I first saw otherworldly beings standing in my room.

I was about 6 years old when I suddenly awoke around 5AM to find a man and a woman standing near the door looking at me. They were wearing white robes and seemed harmless in nature, but I wondered why they were there. In a state of confusion, I covered my face with the blankets and prayed. I have no recollection of what happened after that. Later that morning I told my mother about my “visitors.” Probably because she didn’t want to alarm me, she responded, “Oh, don’t worry, son, it is only your imagination.” My little brain tried hard to comprehend this new big word, “imagination,” but I really couldn’t understand. Rather than challenge my mother, however, I accepted her explanation and went about playing again. Now, over 40 years later, as I vividly recall those two people standing in my room, I can’t discount that experience as a mere figment of my imagination. There *were* people in my room that morning, although I have no idea who they were or why they were there in the first place.

Suffice to say that I am convinced, as you most probably are, that what we see with these physical eyes during our normal daily activities is by no means a complete picture of the world we live in. In fact, science fully verifies this.

Electromagnetic Spectrum

The electromagnetic spectrum is the range of all possible frequencies of electromagnetic radiation. An object’s electromagnetic spectrum is the characteristic distribution of electromagnetic radiation emitted or absorbed by that particular object.

The electromagnetic spectrum (EM), extends from below frequencies used for modern radio to gamma radiation at the short wavelength end, covering wavelengths from thousands of kilometers down to a fraction of the size of an atom.

Electromagnetic radiation that can be detected by the human eye is called *visible light*. Within the electromagnetic spectrum, a typical human eye will respond to wavelengths from about 380 to 750 nm³². The entire electromagnetic spectrum ranges from 10 megameters to a very minute 1 picometer. In layman's terms, this means that more than 99% of the total electromagnetic spectrum is completely beyond our ability to perceive it! Think about that for a second. *Human eyes can only perceive about 1% of the entire electromagnetic spectrum* yet, somewhat audaciously, we hold onto the notion that "seeing is believing."

We often see this in modern science, where theories on creation and the nature of the universe are posited, only to be retracted or adjusted according to newer discoveries or academic bullying. Textbooks are constantly being rewritten. One of the great dilemmas for modern physicists in piecing together the puzzle of creation is rationalizing what they propose to be an accurate picture, with the fact that so many pieces of the puzzle cannot be found.

Dark Energy

However, there are no shortages of theories among physicists to explain the universe and its contents. One such theory to explain the so-called "missing mass" in the universe is the "dark energy" and "dark matter" theories.

In physical cosmology and astronomy, dark energy and dark matter are hypothetical forms of energy, which permeates all of space and tends to accelerate the expansion of the universe.

The quest to solve the puzzle of whether "dark matter" or "dark energy" actually exists and, if so, what it consists of is extremely important to the scientific world, and for good reason. Because without this confirmation, all their other theories are useless.

According to the theory, although this dark matter is invisible and emits no electromagnetic radiation, it *must* have a large cumulative mass since its presence is measurable through its gravitational effects on visible matter. "Dark energy" is simply the remaining unknown. The standard model of cosmology theorizes that dark matter and dark energy accounts for around 95%³³ of all existence in the Universe.

So let's make this simple: this means that about 95% of the universe is unknown! That's right, the greatest minds on our planet with access to the most advanced technology, cannot say, with absolute certainty, what 95% of the puzzle of life is. Therefore, creating any kind of theory under these circumstances is sort of like attempting to create an encyclopedia on a scrabble board without knowing what letters even exist in the box!

Oddly enough, there is a striking correlation between the dark matter, dark energy theories being proposed today and the teachings of Eastern mystics, who suggest that there exists an energetic 'field' that connects all things in this universe and that this energy, known as the *Brahman-jyotir* emanates from Visnu. The word *Brahman* literally means "spiritual," and *jyotir* means "light." According to the *Bhagavad-gita*³⁴, everything that exists is situated within the all-

³² (nm) Nanometer is a unit of spatial measurement equating to one billionth of a meter. It is commonly used in nanotechnology, the building of extremely small machines.

³³ The WMAP (Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe) seven-year analysis gave an estimate of 72.8% dark energy, 22.7% dark matter and 4.6% ordinary matter.

³⁴ *Bhagavad-gita As it is*, Verse: 4.24

pervasive light energy (*brahma-jyotir*) of Visnu. However, when this *brahma-jyotir* is covered by illusion, it is called “material energy”, in the same way that a shadow is created when we turn our back to a light source.

The Superior Senses of Animals

Many animals have far superior senses, and some species can see wavelengths that fall outside humans’ visible spectrum. Bees and other insects, for example, can see light into the ultraviolet range, which helps them find nectar in flowers. Plant species that depend on insect pollination may owe reproductive success to their appearance in ultraviolet light, rather than how colorful they appear to us.

For example, the rising sun’s light filtered by the atmosphere appears to us as red, however, insects like bees are blind to this color. Whereas, our color vision is sensitive to green, blue and red, the bees are sensitive to green, blue and ultraviolet. With only three basic colors, we both create a full color picture, however, the bees worldview is a lot more courser. Seen through a bee’s eye, flowers become strangely unfamiliar. For example, the pretty yellow buttercup flower looks pinker. But maybe this is the true color, because the colors we see have no real relevance to the flower’s evolution. For the flower, these hidden hues have evolved to attract insects.

Birds have the most complex color vision of any animal. They can see well into the ultraviolet range (300-400 nm), and some have sex-dependent markings on their plumage that are only visible in the ultraviolet range. The light sensitive cells of the bird’s eye contain up to five different color pigments. These pigments detect many more color hues than we can see. While the cells of the eye also contain colored oil droplets that act like miniature filters and reveal even more colors! The eyesight of birds such as eagles, hawks and buzzards is 3-4 times sharper than ours. Eagles can spot rabbits from several miles away while hawks and buzzards often scan the earth from a height of 10-15,000 feet looking for tasty rodents! And when they spot one, these birds can dive at over 100 mph and still keep their target in complete focus.

Other examples of the superior senses of animals are a dog’s ability to hear sounds over a wider range of frequencies and a greater distance than we can. Experiments have shown that an average dog can locate the source of a sound in about six-hundredths of a second. Similarly, a wolf has a sense of smell, 100 times sharper than that of human beings, and possess a staggering 200 million olfactory cells in their nose.

Most impressively, a spider can weave a web that has greater tensile strength than steel; an ant can lift up to 50 times its body weight, and the Monarch butterfly’s annual migration has been described as the most astonishing example of endurance in the natural world. Monarchs use a combination of air currents and thermals to travel as far as 3,000 miles to reach their winter home.

The list of amazing feats within the non-human world goes on and on. The fact is, when it comes to vision, endurance, strength, hearing, smelling or dexterity, we human-animals can’t compete. We simply do not have the physical capacity to fully fathom the depths of the known world.

But then how is it, that some humans can have moments of higher perception? Mystic traditions are laden with stories of humans possessing supernatural sensual abilities, and there are

also many documented cases in recent history of humans being able to literally see and record events taking place in distant places using a technique called “remote viewing.”³⁵

It appears that with practice, humans can develop higher sense perception. However, it could also be argued that if society at large curtailed its addiction to intoxication in all its forms, along with the mind numbing effects of television, radio, newspapers and live sport, we may naturally expand our awareness as a result of life experiences. Sadly, though, whereas age is meant to be synonymous with wisdom, in most cases, it becomes an embarrassingly harsh footnote to a wasted human life.

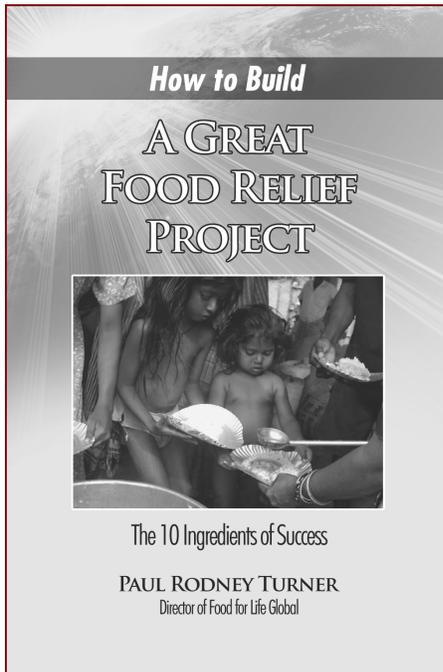
There is much to learn in this respect from the indigenous traditions of the world.

³⁵ Remote viewing is the ability to gather information about a distant or unseen target using paranormal means, in particular, extra-sensory perception (ESP) or sensing with the mind alone. From World War II until the 1970s the US government funded ESP research, and many believe that psychic enhancement programs continue to be a formidable part of modern US military strategy.

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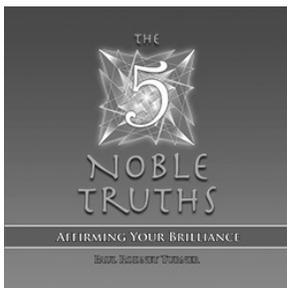
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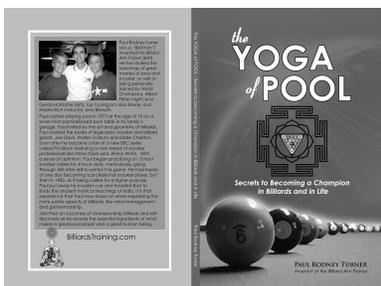
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