

**Many Voices, One Journey:**

**Wise Words for Inspiration**

Each selection from *Many Voices, One Journey* was chosen from the Sounds True archive as a potent wisdom-transmission, offered to open the heart and mind. Each excerpt, in its own unique way, offers a doorway into the center of your being, inviting you into the awe and mystery of this one and only sacred life.

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## **Adjusting Your Default Setting by Jon Kabat-Zinn**

**Excerpted from *Mindfulness for Beginners: Reclaiming the Present Moment—and Your Life***

What is unfolding when nothing much of anything is going on with you? I encourage you to check out for yourself what is going on at such times. For most of us, usually it is thinking. Thinking is going on. It takes lots of different forms.

Thinking seems to constitute our “default setting” rather than awareness.

It is a good thing to notice, because in this way, we might slowly shift from this automatic reverting to thinking over and over again to another mode of mind that may stand us in far better stead, namely awareness itself.

Perhaps over time we can adjust our default setting to one of greater mindfulness rather than of mindlessness and being lost in thought.

As soon as you take your seat or lie down to meditate, the first thing you will notice is that the mind has a life of its own. It just goes on and on and on: thinking, musing, fantasizing, planning, anticipating, worrying, liking, disliking, remembering, forgetting, evaluating, reacting, telling itself stories — a seemingly endless stream of activity that you may not have ever noticed in quite this way until you put out the welcome mat for a few moments of nondoing, of just being.

And what is more, now that you have decided to cultivate greater mindfulness in your life, your mind is at risk for filling up with a host of new ideas and opinions — about meditation, about mindfulness, about how well you’re doing or not doing, about whether you are doing it right — in addition to all the other ideas and opinions swirling around in the mind.

It is a bit like television sports commentary. There is what is actually going on in the game, and then there is the endless commentary. When you begin a formal meditation practice, it is almost inevitable that you will now be subject to meditation commentary to one degree or another. It can fill the space of the mind. Yet it is not the meditation any more than the play-by-play is the game itself.

Sometimes shutting off the sound on the television can allow you to actually watch the game and take in in an entirely different and more direct way — a first-order, first-person experience — rather than filtered through the mind of another. In the case of meditation it is the same, except your own thoughts are doing the broadcast commentary, turning a first-order direct experience of the moment into a second-order story about it: how hard it is, how great it is, and on and on and on.

On some occasions your thoughts might tell you how boring meditation is, how silly you were for thinking that this non-doing approach might be of any value, given that it seems to bring up a good deal of discomfort, tension, boredom, and impatience. You might find yourself questioning the value of awareness, wondering, for instance, how awareness of how uncomfortable you are could possibly “liberate” you, or reduce your stress and anxiety, or help you in any way at all above and beyond just wasting time and succumbing to endless tedium.

This is what the thought-stream does, and that is precisely why we need to become intimate with our minds through careful observation. Otherwise, thinking completely dominates our lives and colors everything we feel and do and care about. And you are not special in this regard. Everybody has a similar thought-stream running 24/7, often without realizing it at all.

**What's Love Got to Do With It? by Marshall Rosenberg**  
**Excerpted from *Living Nonviolent Communication: Practical Tools to Connect and Communicate Skillfully in Every Situation***

It may help you to understand that Nonviolent Communication grew from my attempt to understand the concept of love and how to manifest it, how to *do* it. I had come to the conclusion that love is not just something we feel, but something we manifest, something we do, something we have. And *love is something we give*. We give of ourselves in particular ways. It's a gift when you reveal yourself nakedly and honestly, at any given moment, for no other purpose than to reveal what's alive in you. Not to blame, criticize, or punish—just “Here I am, and here is what I would like. This is my vulnerability at this moment.” To me, that giving is a manifestation of love.

Another way we give of ourselves is through how we receive another person's message. It's a gift to receive it empathically, connecting with what's alive in that person, making no judgment. It's a gift when we try to hear what is alive in the other person and what that person would like. So Nonviolent Communication is just a manifestation of what I understand love to be. In that way, it's similar to the Judeo-Christian concepts of “Love your neighbor as yourself” and “Judge not lest you be judged.”

It's amazing what happens when we connect with people in this way. This beauty, this power connects us with an energy that I choose to call Beloved Divine Energy—one of the many names for God. So Nonviolent Communication helps me stay connected with that beautiful Divine Energy within myself and to connect with it in others. It's the closest thing to “love” I've ever experienced.

**Grace is All Around Us by Adyashanti**  
**Excerpted from *Falling into Grace: Insights on the End of Suffering***

Grace is all around us, if only we have the eyes to see it. The good moments are grace, the difficult moments are grace, the confusing moments are grace. When we can begin to open enough to realize that there is grace in every situation, in each person we meet, no matter how easy or difficult we perceive them to be, our hearts will flower and we'll be able to express the peace and the love that each of us has within us.

We let go into this grace. It's something we fall into, like when we fall into the arms of another, or we put our head on the pillow to go to sleep. It's a willingness to relax, even in the midst of tension. It's a willingness to stop for just a moment, to breathe, to notice that there's something else going on other than the story our mind is telling us. In this moment of grace, we see that whatever might be there in our experience, from the most difficult emotional challenges to the most causeless joy, occurs within a vast space of peace, of stillness, of ultimate well-being.

If we can let go for just a moment, if we can relax, if we can fall into the center of now, we can encounter directly the freedom that we've all been seeking. It is right here, right now. It doesn't lie in the future. It's not going to come when life changes, when the circumstances of our day-to-day reality become different. Freedom is something that's right in the midst of this moment. When we begin to surrender our demand that life change, that life alter itself to suit our ideas, then everything opens. We begin to awaken from this dream of separateness and struggle, and we realize that the grace we were always seeking is actually right there at the center of our own existence. This is the heart of spiritual awakening: to realize that what we have always yearned for is the very thing, in our deepest source, that we have always been. Freedom is always available to us. In those very moments when we know we don't know, when we take the "backward step," heart wide open, we fall into grace.

## **Surrender Only into Love by David Deida**

**Excerpted from *Finding God Through Sex: Awakening the One of Spirit Through the Two of Flesh***

Never surrender to something less than love. Even physical pleasure, in itself, is not worth surrendering to. Instead, surrender through it, be opened by it, into love ever more deep. There certainly is nothing wrong with physical pleasure. Don't avoid it. Allow utter bodily ecstasy to bloom your heart into waves of light. Meanwhile, surrender through the sensations of your bursting flowers and quivering ripples into love. No fleshy pleasure in itself equals love.

Sexual growth involves the practice of intensifying pleasure and desire while surrendering open, bit by bit, as unlimited love and freedom. But if you get lost in pleasure without also opening as heart-spaciousness, then you are limited by the pleasure. You are reduced to a moment of sensation, a one-pointed pig o' pleasure.

Always surrender to the largest love you can. Surrendering to less than this is, ultimately, pain. Only love can fulfill your deepest desire. All lesser emotions and sensations are substitutes for unbounded love. To surrender to them is like scratching an itch that only makes the itching worse. The only real cure is the total surrender to and as love, which is the freedom of open being.

For instance, you may feel accepted by your lover even though you are fat, or thin, or filled with guilt or self-loathing. But don't stop there, surrendering merely to the feeling of acceptance. Rather, freely feel through the sense of personal acceptance, into the most profound sense of open being of which you are capable. Relax *as* this love or openness. After all, there will be many moments when your lover, for one reason or another, does not accept you as you are. Neither acceptance nor rejection lasts for long. Only love itself, the openness of being, is always true of your deepest heart. Love is always there, alive as your core. In any moment, you can remember to feel it, open as it, and give it. But this takes practice.

So practice surrendering into and as this deep love. Don't stop short of it and settle for a mediocre sense of emotional acceptance. Acceptance is fine, but practice feeling all the way into the fundamental flow of love that underlies even the desire to be accepted.

Your lover may give you what you always wanted, but if you get lost in gratitude only, then you are like a child on his or her birthday, entranced by the shine of toys, aglow in the certitude of parental love forever. But parents die, and toys get old. Love itself, the open surrender of your heart as free feeling, is the only sanctuary untouched by time. Surrendering to anything less, as pleasurable or fulfilling as it may be for now, is chaining yourself to inevitable suffering.

**The Longing to Become Who We Are by Reggie Ray**  
**Excerpted from *Touching Enlightenment: Finding Realization in the Body***

According to the teachings of buddha nature, each of us possesses, at our very root and core, a profound and irresistible longing. This is nothing other than a longing to become fully and completely who we are, to experience ourselves and our lives, fully and freely, without doubt, reservation, and holding back. This final realization of ourselves is described as all-loving and powerful—we discover ourselves as everything that we need to be and, because of that, we become completely available to the world and its suffering beings, and discover utter trust and confidence in life.

Because it is who we are, spirituality is not something that we need to seek outside of ourselves. In a way, it is not even something that we can gain or attain. Rather, it is the depth and subtlety of our person and of our experience that we gradually uncover. Religious traditions are usually necessary for providing an understanding of our inborn potential and for showing us how to realize it. But when they claim proprietary ownership of that which we seek, they betray themselves and get in our way. Such are the teachings of Buddhism, and its warning, from its earliest days down to the present.

Buddhism, in its most subtle and sophisticated expression, is not a tradition that seeks to provide answers to life's questions or to dispense "wisdom" to allay our fundamental angst. Rather, it challenges us to look beyond any and all answers that we may have found along the way, to meet ourselves in a naked, direct, and fearless fashion. Not providing answers, as Stephen Batchelor has shown us, Buddhism instead proposes a process of radical questioning. In fact, it challenges us to question everything that we think and feel about ourselves and our reality—all our most basic beliefs, all our assumptions and preconceptions, even in the way we habitually see, hear, and sense the world. We must be willing to let go everything we have believed—every answer that we have come up with down to this moment—in order to find out the final truth of who we are.

This process of questioning may initially be conception; it may involve actually seeing something that we are thinking is so and then asking ourselves, "But is this really the case?" But quickly it moves into the silent sphere of meditative practice—thoughts, feelings, perceptions arise as we meditate. Each time, we find ourselves reacting to them, labeling, judging, pigeonholing them, based on what we have previously thought or assumed. Each time, we look directly at that is arising to see what it really is, beyond our preconceptions, as it abides in the bright light of its own being. In this process, we learn so much about how we limit even our most basic experiences. In seeing how we hold back, we are able to let go, to surrender into a greater sense of openness and being. Thus the journey begins to unfold.



**What is Your Story? by Gangaji**  
**Excerpted from *A Diamond in Your Pocket***

Do you tell yourself stories? Are they stories of what you have or don't have, what you need or don't need? Are they stories of your freedom, your bondage, your lack, your bounty, your grief, your joy? Are they stories of who you are, of who someone else is? Are they stories of what needs to change, of what needs to stay the same, of what is right and of what is wrong?

Are you willing to stop telling your personal story? Are you willing to tell the truth about whether you are willing or not willing?

Whatever you are telling yourself, however horrible or grand, is a story. As a story, as a distillation of experience, it may be the relative truth but it is not the final truth. Stories appear, change, and disappear. Whether your story is about how good or bad you are, it appears and disappears. The final truth has nothing to do with emotions, biochemistry, or changes in circumstance. It is unchanging and unconditional.

You can stop telling your story in less than an instant. Even if it is a good story, stop indulging the telling of it, and immediately the truth can be experienced. You cannot experience the truth if you continue tell your story, and you cannot continue to tell your story if you are experiencing the truth. It's obvious, isn't it?

Stop telling your story *right now*. Not later, when the story gets better or worse, but right now. When you stop telling your story right now, you stop postponing the realization of the truth that is beyond any story. All effort, all difficulty, and all conditioned suffering are in the resistance to stopping. That resistance is fed by the hope that the story will give you what you are yearning for, the hope that if you can just fix the story, make the necessary changes, you will get what you want.

When you stop telling your story about me, him, her, them, or us, you can know in less than an instant the true depths of what it means to *be* who you are. Then whatever story appears or disappears, it doesn't touch who you are.

**Kindness in Action by Sharon Salzberg**  
**Excerpted from *The Kindness Handbook: A Practical Companion***

Many of us long for an underlying sense of meaning, something we can still believe in no matter what happens to us, a navigational force to pull all the disparate pieces of our lives together into some kind of whole. Perhaps we find ourselves feeling helpless when even a little too much of the unexpected occurs, defenseless when we find we don't have control over a situation and can't fathom what might happen next, unsure of where to turn when we aren't having the positive effect we want with a troubled family member or a friend. In any of these circumstances, and in so many more, we shut down. Then we go through the motions of our day, day after day, without much dynamism or spirit.

Many of us experience ourselves as fragmented, perhaps as confident and expressive when we are with our families but a completely different person when we are at work, frequently hesitant and unsure. Perhaps we take risks when we are with others but are timid when alone, or are cozily comfortable when alone yet are painfully shy and withdrawn when with others. Or maybe we drift along with the tides of circumstance, going up and down, not knowing what we might really care about more than anything else, but thinking there must be *something*. To explore kindness as that thread of meaning requires finding out if we can be strong and still be kind, be smart and still be kind, whether we can be profoundly kind to ourselves and at the same time strongly dedicated to kindness for those around us. We have to find the power in kindness, the confidence in kindness, the release in kindness; the type of kindness that transcends belief systems, allegiances, ideologies, cliques, and tribes. This is the trait that can transform our lives.

Kindness is the fuel that helps us truly "walk our talk" of love, a quality so easy to speak about or extol but often so hard to make real. It helps us to genuinely care for one another and for ourselves as well. Kindness is the foundation of unselfconscious generosity, natural inclusivity, and an unfeigned integrity. When we are devoted to the development of kindness, it becomes our ready response, so that reacting from compassion, from caring, is not a question of giving ourselves a lecture: "I don't really feel like it, but I'd better be helpful, or what would people think." When we are devoted to the development of kindness, we are no longer forcing ourselves into a mold we think we have to occupy; rather, it becomes a movement of the heart so deep and subtle that it is like a movement of the sea close to the ocean floor, all but hidden yet affecting absolutely everything that happens above. That's the force of kindness.

**The Five Stages of Radical Forgiveness by Colin Tipping**  
**Excerpted from *Radical Forgiveness: A Revolutionary Five-Stage Process to Heal Relationships, Let Go of Anger and Blame, and Find Peace in Any Situation***

No matter what form the technology of Radical Forgiveness takes, each is designed to take you through the five essential stages of Radical Forgiveness. These are:

**1. Telling the Story**

In this step, someone willingly and compassionately listens to us tell our story and honors it as being our truth in the moment. (If you are doing a worksheet, this person might be yourself.) Having our story heard and witnessed is the first step to letting it go. Just as the first step in releasing victimhood is to own it fully, so must we own our story in its fullness from the point of view of being a victim and avoid any spiritual interpretation at this stage.

Here we must begin from where we are (or were, if we are going back into the past to heal something), so that we can feel some of the pain that caused the energy block in the first place.

**2. Feeling the Feelings**

This is the vital step that many so-called spiritual people want to leave out, thinking that they shouldn't have "negative" feelings. That's denial, pure and simple, and it misses the crucial point that authentic power resides in our capacity to feel our feelings fully and, in that way, show up as fully human. It is only when we give ourselves permission to access our pain that our healing begins. The healing journey is essentially an emotional one. But it doesn't have to be all pain either. It is surprising how, as we go down through the levels of emotion and allow ourselves to feel the authentic pain, it can quickly turn to peace, joy, and thankfulness.

**3. Collapsing the Story**

This step looks at how our story began and how our interpretations of events led to certain (false) beliefs forming in our minds that have determined how we think about ourselves and how we have lived our lives. When we come to see that these stories are, for the most part, untrue and serve only to keep us stuck in the victim archetype, we become empowered to make the choice to stop giving them our vital life force energy. Once we decide to retrieve our energy, we take back our power, and the stories wither and die.

It is also at this step that we might exercise a high degree of compassion for the person we are forgiving and bring to the table some straightforward, honest-to-goodness understanding of the way life often is and just how imperfect we all are—and the realization that we are all doing the very best we can with what we are given. Much of this we might categorize as traditional forgiveness, but it is nevertheless important as a first step and a reality check. After all, most of our stories have their genesis in early childhood, when we imagined that the whole world revolved around us and that everything was our fault.

So this is where we can give up some of that child-centered woundedness. Here we can bring our adult perspective to bear and confront our inner child with the plain truth of what really did or didn't happen, as distinct from our interpretations about what we think happened. It is amazing how ridiculous many of our stories seem once we allow the light in. But the real value in this step is in releasing our attachment to the story, so we can more easily begin to make the transition required in the next step.

#### 4. Reframing the Story

This is where we allow ourselves to shift our perception in such a way that instead of seeing the situation as a tragedy, we become willing to see that it was in fact exactly what we wanted to experience and was absolutely essential to our growth. In that sense, it was perfect. At times we will be able to see the perfection right away and learn the lesson immediately. Most often, however, it is a matter of giving up the need to figure it out and surrendering to the idea that the gift is contained in the situation, whether we know it or not. It is in that act of surrender that the real lesson of love is learned and the gift received. This is also the step of transformation, for as we begin to become open to seeing the divine perfection in what happened, our victim stories, which were once vehicles for anger, bitterness, and resentment, become transformed into stories of appreciation, gratitude, and loving acceptance.

#### 5. Integration

After we have allowed ourselves to be willing to see the perfection in the situation and turned our stories into ones of gratitude, it is necessary to integrate that change at the cellular level. That means integrating it into the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual bodies so that it becomes a part of who we are. It's like saving what you have done on the computer to the hard drive. Only then will it become permanent.

**On Contemplation by Thomas Merton**  
**Excerpted from *Choosing to Love the World: On Contemplation***

Contemplation is life itself, fully awake, fully active, fully aware that it is alive. It is spiritual wonder. It is spontaneous awe at the sacredness of life, of being. It is gratitude for life, for awareness, and for being. It is a vivid realization of the fact that life and being in us proceed from an invisible, transcendent, and infinitely abundant Source. Contemplation is, above all, awareness of the reality of that Source. It knows the Source, obscurely, inexplicably, but with a certitude that goes beyond reason and beyond simple faith ... It is a more profound depth of faith, a knowledge too deep to be grasped in images, in words, or even in clear concepts.

Poetry, music and art have something in common with the contemplative experience. But contemplation is beyond aesthetic intuition, beyond art, beyond poetry. Indeed, it is also beyond philosophy, beyond speculative theology. It resumes, transcends and fulfills them all, and yet at the same time it seems, in a certain way, to supersede and to deny them all. Contemplation is always beyond our own knowledge, beyond our own light, beyond systems, beyond explanations, beyond discourse, beyond dialogue, beyond our own self. To enter into the realm of contemplation one must in a certain sense die: but this death is in fact the entrance to a higher life. It is a death for the sake of life, which leaves behind all that we can know or treasure as life, as thought, as experience, as joy, as being.

When I speak of the contemplative life, I do not mean the institutional cloistered life, the organized life of prayer.... I am talking about a special dimension of inner discipline and experience, a certain integrity and fullness of personal development, which are not compatible with a purely external, alienated, busy-busy existence. This does not mean that these special dimensions are incompatible with action, with creative work, with dedicated love. On the contrary, these all go together. A certain depth of disciplined experience is a necessary ground for fruitful action. Without a more profound human understanding derived from exploration of the inner ground of human existence, love will tend to be superficial and deceptive. Traditionally, the ideas of prayer, meditation and contemplation have been associated with this deepening of one's personal life and this expansion of the capacity to understand and serve others.

## **The Wisdom of Our Difficulties by Jack Kornfield**

**Excerpted from *A Lamp in the Darkness: Illuminating the Path Through Difficult Times***

If you're reading these words, you've probably hit hard times. Perhaps you've lost a loved one, or maybe you've lost your job, or received a difficult diagnosis, or someone close to you has. Maybe you're divorcing or you're in bankruptcy or you've been injured, or your life is falling apart in any number of ways. Maybe daily life itself has become too much for you... or not enough. But even in the best of times there's plenty to worry about: seemingly endless wars and violence, racism, our accelerating environmental destruction. In difficult times, personally or collectively, we often begin to wonder not only how we can get through this difficult path: we begin to question existence itself.

Grief and loss and suffering, even depression and spiritual crisis—the dark nights of the soul—only worsen when we try to ignore or deny or avoid them. The healing journey begins when we face them and learn how to work with them. When we stop fighting against our difficulties and find the strength to meet our demons and difficulties head on, we often find that we emerge stronger and more humble and grounded than we were before. To survive our difficulties is to become initiated into the fraternity of wisdom.

The real tragedy is when we refuse to acknowledge and respect our own suffering, and instead spread it unconsciously to others. As the Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel has written, “Suffering confers neither privileges nor rights; it all depends on how one uses it. If you use it to increase the anguish of others, you are degrading, even betraying it... And yet the day will come... when we shall all understand that suffering can elevate man as well as diminish him.”

### **Awaken the One Who Knows**

If you pay careful attention in the midst of your crises, you will begin to sense a witnessing consciousness, a wise presence inside of you that could be called “the one who knows.” This knowing presence is consciousness itself, present in every moment of your life, even when it feels far away from you. Even in the toughest times of illness and loss, in your deepest depressions and griefs, underneath even your most catastrophic challenges and fears, the one who knows in you remains calm and clear. It already accepts whatever is going on. It sees beyond the immediate situation to something much larger. It knows that whatever change has come—no matter how much of a surprise it is to you—was going to happen. It knows that whatever is, *is*—whether we accept it or not. The one who knows is even often able to see grim humor in the most difficult situations. And it knows long before we do that the end of our suffering begins when we turn to face our suffering and embrace its truth and healing wisdom.

But how can we find this “one who knows” in the midst of our most overwhelming difficulties? Go to the mirror. Look at your face. You will see someone who looks older than you looked several years ago, although inside you don't feel any older. This is because your body has aged. The timeless awareness through which you see your body is the one who knows. Your body is

only a temporary vessel for this awareness. It is a physical container for the undying consciousness of the one who knows.

## **Entering the Cave of the Heart by Sally Kempton**

**Excerpted from *Meditation for the Love of It: Enjoying Your Own Deepest Experience***

Meditation is not something for which you need a special talent, the way you need a talent for mathematics or art. The real key to going deep in meditation is wanting to go deep. The more you crave the taste of the inner world, the easier it is to meditate. In Sanskrit that desire is called *mumukshutva*, the wish for the freedom that comes with Self-knowledge. Your desire doesn't have to be huge at first. Even a slight spark of interest is enough, because the inner world is actually yearning to open up to you. Once your meditation energy has been awakened, it keeps pulsing inside, just under the skin. It is constantly sending you signals, whispering, "Here I am! Meet me! I'm your guide! I have so many things to show you about yourself!" That is why the moment you become truly interested in knowing your Self, in entering the field of your own Awareness, the inner world begins to reveal itself. It can't help it. That's what it exists to do.

The problem is that we aren't always interested in our meditation. Many of us, when we meditate at all, do it because we know it is good for us. Perhaps it is part of our ongoing self-improvement project or a strategy we use to keep stress at bay. Shortly after this book began taking shape, a friend complained to me about her meditation practice. It had become flat, she said. It didn't deeply engage her. In fact, she didn't much enjoy meditating. I could tell from her tone that as a serious spiritual practitioner, she felt slightly ashamed about this. So I asked her, "What's the best thing about meditating for you?"

She thought for a minute, and then said, "It's my therapy. When I sit down, I'm usually burning with inner upheaval, worried about something, or just stuffed with negativity. I repeat my mantra for fifteen or twenty minutes, and when I get up, my mind is calm. I feel quiet. I can go on with my day." Then she said, "I know I have to do it every day, or else my mind makes me crazy."

My friend is getting something important from her practice. In fact, she's experiencing one of meditation's major gifts: its power to clear the mind. Yet because that's all she wants, she gets up from meditation just at the moment when the real sweetness inside her could start to reveal itself. It's when the mind calms that we begin to discern the wideness of our own being, the love inside. If, along with appreciating meditation's therapeutic benefits, my friend could meditate for the sake of entering into herself, she might stay in meditation a little longer and go deeper than she is going now.

The people who seem to get the most out of their practice are the ones who simply enjoy the act of meditating. This doesn't necessarily mean that they have exotic experiences. Far from it. Many swear that they have never so much as glimpsed a light or seen a vision or felt their thoughts dissolve into spaciousness. Yet if you listen to them talk about their practice, you realize that they are tasting the richness of their entire meditation experience in all its seasons.

When you approach your meditation with interest, that simple time of sitting becomes enjoyable in itself. You listen to the whisper of the breath, you savor the pulsation of a mantra—a meditative word—as it sinks through the layers of your consciousness. You enjoy the rising stillness, the vagrant images flitting through the inner space, and the gradual shift into a quieter mind. Each moment, whether dramatic or seemingly boring, can be full of fascination. You are with yourself. You are with God. Your meditation is an entry into the cave of the heart, the cave of the spirit.



**A Source Beyond Ego, a Grace Beyond Luck by Michael Bernard Beckwith**  
**Excerpted from *Life Visioning: A Transformative Process for Activating Your Unique Gifts and Highest Potential***

There is a life occurrence or a sequence of events unique to each of us that breaks through our self-imposed limitations, our egoic self-will, beckoning the Authentic Self to come forward and announce itself to us. Whether you credit it to karma or that which seeks to emerge through us, the wisdom in this grace knows exactly what conditions will cause us to exclaim, “Enough is enough. I give my consent to my next level of growth.” We then set out to identify the qualities we must acquire when the truth is just the opposite: we are already fully equipped with what it takes to live the highest vision for our life. All we have to do is tap into it, to discover it within ourselves and put it into action. Visioning shines the light upon our inner treasure house, illuminating our natural wisdom, joy, compassion, intelligence, love, tranquility, creativity, and generosity.

It is a source beyond ego that provides the inner guidance that will lead us to transcending our current limitations. It lets us know we face nothing alone, that we are indeed carried by the Creator-Life walking in our feet, working through our hands, beating our hearts, and breathing through our breath. This Great Mystery is the motivating power within the Life Visioning Process. It is the underlying urge to evolve into our innate wholeness.

May each and every one of us say “yes” to accepting our life purpose, which is born out of love, thrives in love, and merges in union with love’s source.