



Nisargadatta Maharaj



Kahlil Gibran

## Insights From 35 Years as a Psychotherapist

*“A woman with a necklace around her neck imagines it is lost, and after a long search elsewhere touches her own neck and there finds it; even so, the Self is here within. Probe for it there and find it.” – Ramana Maharshi*

*“No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.” – Albert Einstein*

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*From practically cradle to practically grave, the state of consciousness that human beings live in and as, is a fear-based one that I call the ego consciousness. It is a consciousness of lack. In the innermost substratum of our minds, presiding over all of our thoughts as the unthought thought that generates almost all others, it manifests as the belief that “I am not good enough” or “I am inadequate” or “I am unworthy” or “I need more\_\_\_\_\_”.*

*As our core emotional or psychological condition, it manifests as the three pandemics of the twenty-first century - depression, anxiety and loneliness - pandemics that rival the Black Plague of the fourteenth century in their scope of inflicting agony, debilitation and destructiveness on vast numbers of the human race. At the behavioral level, we endlessly and desperately crave to fill up and satiate the yawning hole at the centre of our souls - this consciousness of lack that incessantly eats away at our confidence, peace and safety.*

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*We acquire objects, purchasing bigger homes, sexier vehicles, technological toys, in the vain hope of allaying these feelings at the core of the self. We pursue activities, working or working out compulsively, sex, pursuing ever more exotic and daredevil thrills and experiences. We consume substances, food, sugar, caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, prescription drugs and mind-altering drugs. We “use” relationships for recognition, need and validation, to give us a mirror in which to reflect a self that otherwise we don’t know and can’t find. At the societal and global level, our overconsumption of the Earth’s natural resources, in combination with our chronic unhappiness and hunger for its cure, generate massive and deadly inequities for our brothers and sisters elsewhere.*

*A radical shift is warranted not, in my opinion, in our politics, economics or environmental policies which, after all, have only been created by human beings attempting to protect and save other select human beings for whom they care and feel responsible, but in a place much, much closer to home –our minds, our day-to-day operating consciousness, our fundamental spiritual understanding and knowing of who and what we are.*

*This shift it seems will need to take place in the deepest depths of our human programming and conditioning. An intrapersonal, intra-psyche revolution that can only occur one person at a time. We know that the great sages and hearts of our past – like Buddha, Jesus, Mary, Allah, Ramana Maharshi, Albert Einstein, Mahatma Gandhi and Mother Theresa have pointed to a completely different way of being human. One where our primary identity is not based in our mind/body/personality; one where our love is not restricted to those few nearest and dearest to us; one in which we do not devote 95% of our life’s energies to our self-interests and survival; one in which we know ourselves to be and abide in a consciousness where there is no difference or separation between who we are and all sentient beings, animals or plant life.*

*Fortunately, many beautiful and powerful sages and hearts are also alive today, like Adyashanti, Rupert Spira, Mooji, Lesley Spira and perhaps others you know of and I don’t, who not only talk to a unitary, non-dual, universal, love-based consciousness but can show us the way and guide us to embody this possibility of experiencing our oneness with all. Technology puts them into our study or living rooms at the click of a mouse.*

*I will end this short piece with two quotes from two other sages and guides no longer in the body who have had a deep, life-changing impact on the being I now know myself to be - Nisargadatta Maharaj and Kahlil Gibran. May their lives, words and pointers speak piercingly to what resonates most deeply in you, showing you what you have been, are, and always will be as your most essential and true self.*

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*“The body and the mind are limited and therefore vulnerable; they need protection which gives rise to fear. As long as you identify yourself with them you are bound to suffer; realize your independence and remain happy. I tell you, this is the secret to happiness. To believe that you depend on things and people for happiness is due to ignorance of your true nature; to know that you need nothing to be happy, except Self-knowledge, is wisdom.” – Nisargadatta Maharaj*

# Beyond the “I” I Think I Am: A Deeply Personal One Year Program on Spirituality and Non-Dual Teachings

*“A woman with a necklace around her neck imagines it is lost, and after a long search elsewhere touches her own neck and there finds it; even so, the Self is here within. Probe for it there and find it.” - Ramana Maharshi*

*“The separate self is like a character in a movie that travels the world in search of the screen.” - Rupert Spira*

If you are anything like me, you have spent most of your life identifying yourself as a separate person, with a distinct name, form and place in the world. This “I” that I think I am feels itself to be a small, temporary, inadequate, and vulnerable entity, subject to being easily thrown by the twists and turns of situations, events and relationships. It is enslaved by “I want”, “I don’t want”, “I like”, “I don’t like”, “I need”, “I don’t need”. When we get what we want or like, we’re happy. When we don’t get what we want or like, we’re miserable, frightened, angry or strategic. A tremendous amount of control, manipulation and struggle is always required to ensure that we get only what we want. This is the suffering and plight of seeing who you are as a separate self. This and the sorrow and terror of dodging illness, aging and death for as long as possible. Seeing yourself as a separate “I” runs the show in this way from cradle to grave.

Ask yourself the truth now: Have you found a solid and constant happiness, peace and love as a separate self? Have you realized a comforting, always accessible presence that is not dependent on anything or anyone external to you? Do you have a deep, heart-felt desire to live from silence, intuition and awareness instead of mental chatter? This is the principle objective and path of this One Year Program.

The Sun within us is always and forever shining. It is impeded from its fullest radiance by the very branches of the ego identity that we have brought forth to survive in this world. Are you ready for some voluntary but significant pruning?

This experience will appeal to those who want to root out the multiplicity of tactics and tentacles of the separate (ego) self; who have made or want to make spiritual practice the centre of their daily lives; who have or want to develop an unstoppable yearning to know and merge with the “Beloved” by whatever name you know the “Beloved” to be – God, Self, Truth, Jesus, Higher Power, Peace, or Freedom. Using meditation, deeply personal journaling with inner wisdom, the teachings of non-dual beings like Mooji, Rupert Spira and Lesley Skylar and the invaluable relationship with other mighty companions on the road “Home”, we will step out of the narrow band-width of the separate self into the field of unlimited, unitary consciousness that is our natural self.

*“Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing there is a field. I’ll meet you there.” - Rumi*

**FORMAT:** 6 experientially based weekend workshops spaced approximately 2 months apart beginning April 27/28, 2019; buddy system; optional but highly recommended weekly support group meetings

**COST:** \$1650 + G.S.T. (payable over the course of the year). No one, with sincere heart and commitment, will be turned away because of financial impediments.

**TO REGISTER:** Contact Catriona, seminar coordinator, at (778) 773-2726 or [seminarsjoelbrass@gmail.com](mailto:seminarsjoelbrass@gmail.com)

## Kahlil Gibran on Love

*When love beckons to you, follow him,  
Though his ways are hard and steep.  
And when his wings enfold you yield to him,  
Though the sword hidden among his pinions may wound you.  
And when he speaks to you believe in him,  
Though his voice may shatter your dreams  
as the north wind lays waste the garden.*

*For even as love crowns you so shall he crucify you. Even as he is for your growth so is he for your pruning.  
Even as he ascends to your height and caresses your tenderest branches that quiver in the sun,  
So shall he descend to your roots and shake them in their clinging to the earth.*

*Like sheaves of corn he gathers you unto himself.  
He threshes you to make you naked.  
He sifts you to free you from your husks.  
He grinds you to whiteness.  
He kneads you until you are pliant;  
And then he assigns you to his sacred fire, that you may become sacred bread for God's sacred feast.*

*All these things shall love do unto you that you may know the secrets of your heart, and in that knowledge become a fragment of Life's heart.*

*But if in your fear you would seek only love's peace and love's pleasure,  
Then it is better for you that you cover your nakedness and pass out of love's threshing-floor,  
Into the seasonless world where you shall laugh, but not all of your laughter, and weep, but not all of your tears.  
Love gives naught but itself and takes naught but from itself.  
Love possesses not nor would it be possessed;  
For love is sufficient unto love.*

*When you love you should not say, "God is in my heart," but rather, "I am in the heart of God."  
And think not you can direct the course of love, for love, if it finds you worthy, directs your course.*

*Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself.  
But if you love and must needs have desires, let these be your desires:  
To melt and be like a running brook that sings its melody to the night.  
To know the pain of too much tenderness.  
To be wounded by your own understanding of love;  
And to bleed willingly and joyfully.  
To wake at dawn with a winged heart and give thanks for another day of loving;  
To rest at the noon hour and meditate love's ecstasy;  
To return home at eventide with gratitude;  
And then to sleep with a prayer for the beloved in your heart and a song of praise upon your lips.*

### RELATIONSHIPS: THE WORK OF LOVE

In this seminar we examine ourselves as the perpetrators of pain. We examine the myriad flight and fight responses that we have employed to keep from our hearts and souls the very people we say we want to love, the very people who have committed the "crime" of loving us. This most certainly could include our love interest but we will also examine our relationship with our father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter and past loves to discover the ego patterns that have run us and our relationships into the ground.

We begin to move from being baffled, righteous, or victimized by our love lives to taking 100% responsibility for the state that our most significant relationships are in. All of our dynamics and imposed barriers to real intimacy, committed love and monogamy are faced.

Only then can we discover and examine the components of a healthy, loving and mutually beneficial relationship. Only then can we discover that with courage, vulnerability, honesty and humility, we can begin to experiment with laying down our survival-oriented, fear-based ego patterns and establish an entirely new base from which to interact with the people of our lives.

DATE: SAT / SUN, MAY 25 & 26, 2019

contact: Catriona (seminar coordinator) at (778) 773-2726 or email: [seminarsjoelbrass@gmail.com](mailto:seminarsjoelbrass@gmail.com)