

Colors

of the

Spirit

Janet Faubert

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Infinity, Eternity, the Absolute...
Profound puzzles entertain the mind
while the truth lies gently
in a simple heart that's kind.

JF

Dedication

This book was written for and is dedicated to my readers:
You were in my heart with every word.

And to the
Absolute Supreme.
I was in your heart with every word.

With heart-felt gratitude to
my husband Barry
and our children, Ryan, Skye, and Evan.

Without your patience and support this
book would never have been written.

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Introduction

God Has To Make Sense!

The trail emerged from the forest and clambered up a granite outcropping. We looked at each other, and instantly it became a race. Invigorated, we pushed ourselves until every muscle cried. Quartz and pink rocks and probably some beautiful fossils tumbled behind us. Certainly, the gentle moss regretted our passing. Finally we collapsed on the summit, delighted with our non-athletic, forty-year-old stamina. Through ragged breath, we gulped tepid, oh so sweet, water.

Our reward was the scenery. From our vantage we could see the lake (our destination) in the distance. The sky was startling blue, hung at the horizon with a pale slip of moon. Sunlight splashed in the trees and sparked the water. Fall colours were flung like laughter across the valley. Such vibrant splendor, such carefree exuberance! No excuse is necessary for the extravagance of nature! We rested, awed and uplifted.

Once revived, we had to be on our way as evening drops quickly in October. We looked for a way down. There were no trail markers. Skirting the cliff edge, we found a crevice, twelve feet steep, with loose stones and precarious handholds. Another challenge: this time not so much fun. Cautiously we descended, helping each other.

The rest of the way was easy. We jogged. The boulder radiated afternoon sun so that by the time we entered the forest again, the shade was a relief. To my surprise, the effervescent mood that I had sensed from above was intensified here. The air was drenched with autumn. Gold, scarlet, and maroon rippled against the brilliant sky. Everything pulsed with life. My heart opened to the breathtaking beauty, and I became aware of *living* harmony and intelligence all around. I could sense the roots beneath my feet

drinking and growing and *knowing*. I could feel the branches and leaves celebrating. *We were immersed in truth, in all-pervading life.* Vivid elation overcame me.

Then, at the lake another dimension was revealed. We crouched on the shore, watching minnows dart here and there above dappled stones. A baby turtle drifted past us. He paddled lazily, nonchalantly even, looking cheekily up at us. What attitude for a little speck of life! We burst into laughter. He was not troubled by looming winter. The season was late, but he floated aimlessly. He would know when it was time to dig his muddy bed. He would just *know* and be fine.

That moment declared the eternal, unfathomable perfection of the universe. This ordinary turtle struck me as utterly remarkable. In him the seamless and vast diversity of life professed its intelligent source. How could all this exist without God! It blazed of divine truth! I grew dizzy from it.



When I walk in nature's kaleidoscope, I know without reflection, I know without doubt, that there is one truth. There are many religions, uncountable spiritual perspectives, but there is only *one* truth. Whatever this truth is, it is immense; we cannot comprehend it and we cannot deny it. It is so wonderful we cannot even *imagine* it. Can we grasp how a flower is born, exhibiting delicacy and fragrance and beauty? Can we explain how Michelangelo and Mozart created their astonishing art? How wondrous is the ballet of stars and galaxies? The secrets of the universe are hidden; the depths of the human being are unfathomable.

*Secret and sacred, the truth draws each one of us,
an elusive undercurrent in our individual lives.*

Sometimes the truth reveals itself in an expansive way, like my experience with the trees and the turtle, but most often, it is a whisper.



So endures the age-old quandary: what is truth? The eternal question nudges from within while outwardly there is apparent chaos. So many religions! So many perspectives and prejudices!

My argument begins with the contention that the spiritual urge is intrinsic to human nature. It springs from the core of our being. We are, in essence, spiritual creatures.

This, of course is not a new argument. But it remains debated. Skeptics and materialists dismiss spirituality as imagination or a psychological crutch, but who can deny that the simplest tribal person professes its urgent impulse as well as the most esteemed prodigy of our race? Even Albert Einstein believed in "God."

Neither social structure nor scientific prejudice has quashed spirituality. It has not been restrained by dogma. Every civilization, past and present, has committed enormous wealth to spiritual expression; it is proclaimed in the art, music, poetry, and architecture of all ages.

Doesn't it make sense to examine this persistent phenomenon from an objective stance? Perhaps if we could determine the origin of mystical belief it might be possible to sort through all the variants of philosophy. What scientific evidence is there of metaphysical reality? What has science stumbled upon as researchers throughout the world have explored myriad avenues? It is only logical to take a closer look.

Religions would have us believe that insight into truth comes from the study of sacred texts; surely I am not alone in being discouraged by the endless opinions that are wrung from ancient tomes. Even within a single religion's scriptures, it takes mental gymnastics to explain contradictions. If spiritual literature were easily interpreted, we would have had one world religion centuries ago. The

Bible, the Torah, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Vedas, the Qur'an, the Tao Te Ching, and the Tibetan Book of the Dead (to name only the most familiar) have provided succor to millions over the centuries. They are considered the inspired heritage of mankind, but they have divided us rather than brought us together. The shining tenets of the world faiths are tangled in superstition and obscured by doctrine.

Could it be that we are missing something? If spiritual writing is meant to reveal the essence of mankind, then it is telling a universal veracity. Every holy book must have the same fundamental narrative—a narrative that unites mankind. Since we cannot deny that we do not understand our own essential principle, our own spiritual story, could it be that this same ignorance is preventing us from realizing what is being communicated in these books?

Few readers respect that spiritual writing is an ancient genre spoken in veiled language, originating from a higher consciousness. If it is inspired writing, then it must have, by definition, risen from elevated perception. This explains the inevitable confusion; eminent concepts have been read through mundane understanding. Could it be that the religions that grew from these texts were bred by normal intellects interpreting ideas profound beyond our understanding?

To decipher these writings we have to put away our literal interpretation and search for the shared insight that they contain. This means that we have to sift metaphor from history and allegory from reality. We have to be wary of our own limitations of prejudice and comprehension.

And, of course, interpretation of religious writings must agree with the natural order; nature, after all, is the first “word.” Nature is the pure expression of the creative force, and the creative force, in religious interpretation, is considered to be “God.” Every religion contends that God formed the physical world, and therefore it makes sense that interpretation of sacred writing must not deny the natural order. Right?

Well, strangely enough, rather than seeing the natural realm as a template and opportunity for spiritual insight, nature is consistently interpreted through prevalent religious thought. Religion has been notoriously reluctant to accept expanded scientific knowledge

if it does not, at first glance, verify entrenched beliefs. For example: the creation/evolution debate continues to flail!

Incredibly, the explosion of knowledge in the twentieth century has barely caused a raised eyebrow in mainstream religious thinking. For the most part, established religions have ignored the profound implications of current scientific understanding—especially discoveries that glimpse spirituality. When was the last time your minister spoke about quantum physics? (To be fair, where can the church go with the “observer effect” when God is supposed to be an omnipotent ruler?) At the same time, developments in spirituality tempt science, and the scientific community has, in turn, reacted with predictable skepticism. Undeniably, Western suspicion of all things mystical impedes our investigation and comprehension. What a predicament!

But as science has explored the natural world, it has revealed unexpected implications. Unlike religion, science escapes confinement. As new discoveries are made, scientific thought is always adjusting. Findings in one field impact another. The sands are always shifting.

So it only makes sense to investigate how accepted scientific knowledge dovetails with our best understanding of the metaphysical world: what has science revealed about the incorporeal world and what is seen when spirituality is examined scientifically? If we cannot apply science and intellect to spirituality, then spirituality is nonsense...or science is nonsense.

If spirituality and science are not absolutely compatible we are living in an Alice-in-Wonderland universe.

This book is about *truth*—about the big picture—the great scheme of things. It is about the truth that turns the universe; turns carousels and quantum particles; directs day-to-day events; creates life and inflicts death; the truth that is so intricate and vast that we can only gape in wonder.

Scientific evidence that suggests a link between the physical and the metaphysical has finally begun to hit the mainstream. Two fascinating books, *The Field* by Lynne McTaggart and *The God Theory* by Bernard Haisch explain the evidence of a collaboration of material and mind from the quantum physical to the metaphysical in simple statements of explicit detail that a layman can understand. Science is beginning to understand that there is unity that “rolls through all things” (Wordsworth 2000, 134).

When understood by the general population, this unity that is unencumbered by tradition and superstition will clarify our religions, revealing one Source and one goal for all of mankind. *One goal*. Not until the origin of mysticism is understood will humanity as a whole come to accept that religions are cultural expressions of spirituality, rather than the definitive truth. Spirituality is not separate from physical reality; spirituality is simply the invisible, inner facet of life. When science is able to explain the genesis of aspiration, the greatest irritant between people and cultures will be removed.

A necessary step toward world harmony is the irrefutable, scientific verification of spiritual purpose: all religions have the same basis and teach the same truths with common intention. This is imperative. With a singular foundation, the human race will understand and pursue one purpose and one purpose only: to fulfill our spiritual destiny.



The final frontier is not the oceans or the skies—it is the Spirit. The secrets of life are contained in spirituality. For without the light of spirit, there is no life. We will never answer the great questions by intellectual effort alone. This is the great paradox that science has yet to discover.

Spirituality pervades existence. Everything in life is spiritual. *Spirituality is life itself*. Everything is connected at the spirit level. It does not matter how good or bad or religious we are—being *alive* is being spiritual.

This is easily recognized in birth and death and perhaps during a few events in between, but naively we miss the holiness woven through the casual moments of our lives. We carry on, immersed in the minutiae, but oblivious to the greater picture. Difficult relationships, business deals, a walk in the park are all spiritual experiences. Truth is woven through life—in accidents, scientific discoveries, accomplishment, failure, integrity, deceit, and so much more.

We live at breathtaking speed with responsibility and ambition exhausting us. So engrossed are we in activity that perspective is clouded. The daily routine is devoted to survival while spirituality is allocated to an hour on the weekend—if that.

This is not how it should be.

We are *expressions* of spirituality. What makes mankind unique in all creation is that we, individually, can explore our individual spirituality. We can live with spiritual resolve.

*To live spiritually is to be aware of all things
having personal spiritual context.*

Every person aspires in an individual way. Despite uncertain purpose, despite the bewildering cacophony of philosophical thought, each of us seeks higher realization. We yearn to pierce the mysteries of life. Every person leans against the limits of his own mind. We long to understand goodness and evil, justice, fate, and purpose.

Creativity springs from imagination: love, courage, hope, and periodically, incalculable evil rise from our hearts. The diversity of human experience confounds and disturbs us. How does such boundless disparity exist between individuals—not only in regard to their poverty or wealth, but also in intelligence, talent, and physicality? Will we ever be able to reconcile the misery of a war-ravaged child with the glamour and opulence of a movie star’s life? Where is the fairness of a child born with ineffectual limbs or damaged mental capacity? Are these things perpetually beyond our understanding?

Are we meant to struggle in ignorance and pain forever?



The objective of this book is to dispel some of the shadow: to reveal the continuity and cohesiveness of our seemingly random world. Then, with this fresh outlook *Colours of the Spirit* explains how we can live normal lives with deliberate spiritual intent. Living spiritually means recognizing the profound implications of all relationships and events, and in this understanding, striving to be the best you can be in all circumstances. It means living fully, *mindful that the whole life defines spiritual purpose*. It is being aware of ethical responsibility within an expanded reality.

But how? How can a person purposefully and without doubt become aware of spiritual reality and unerringly follow a spiritual path?

The answer is meditation.

Oh, no, not another book about meditation!

Yes. Meditation. Meditation is the key to inner reality: the resting of the personality (read, ego!) and quickening of the spirit. Meditation aligns the inner and outer natures.

Meditating expands the role of spirit in conscious life and diminishes that of ego.

The purpose of earthly life is to advance spiritual intention. We live physical lives for spiritual expression. *All experience is spiritual before it becomes physical*. Spiritual reality is condensed into physical form for our experience.

The system that transforms spiritual reality into earthly manifestation is perfect, as is all of creation. Physical existence rises from metaphysical order by way of metaphysical laws: universal laws. *These laws are integral elements of the universe—as pervasive and real as gravity*. And like gravity, these spiritual laws unerringly

maintain the aggregation of physical existence. They apply whether or not you know about them.

But we *do* know them—spiritual leaders have taught us these laws many times. They are recognizable in every spiritual tradition. To our own detriment, we have misinterpreted, misunderstood, and ignored them. Unfortunately, and obviously, by the mess our world is in, we do not accept that they are absolute. But, except by grace, they are.

The trick to living spiritually is in understanding these universal laws and co-operating with them. It is through meditation that this co-operation is achieved. Meditation transforms a life lived aimlessly into a life with deliberate direction and expression. It opens intellectual and intuitive awareness to spiritual dimension. And in the process, scientists are beginning to understand that *meditation transforms the brain*.



Let me shift gears here. Let me explain how I came to write a book challenging the interpretation of spiritual literature and demanding that God make sense. It is not that I think my opinions are exceptional or unusual. In fact, I think that my restless view of the status quo is quite common. Huge numbers of people have turned away from organized religion but still profess strong spiritual inclination. If you have not tossed this book aside yet, it is probable that I am conveying concepts that you have already pondered or intuitively felt. I think that mankind is beginning to conclude that our religions don't match our spiritual instincts. In writing this book, I am following my instincts.

God had my attention right from the beginning—the mystery, the beauty, the power—and when I say “God” I don't mean a cranky grandfather. I mean the intelligent, creative force of the universe: the Source beyond our comprehension.

Perhaps I was told at a very early age that God was everywhere because I can recall my awareness of God through my earliest memories—not in a loving or fearful way, just Presence. Maybe

every child feels his divinity, but with memories of first steps and diaper changes, it fades from consciousness. Attached to my earliest memories is an impression of all-embracing purity.

Everyone went to church in the 1950s and '60s (everyone I knew, anyway). If you weren't part of a congregation, you were either lower class, or suspect. Certainly, you were judged.

We were Anglican. Our next-door playmates went to the Presbyterian Church, and other neighborhood kids were Roman Catholic. I didn't question why we went to different churches until I discovered at age five that we did not all believe the same things. Huh? If Christianity was the truth, how could we have different beliefs? The truth was the truth, wasn't it? I assumed that I just did not fully understand. I thought that it would make sense to me as I grew older.

But it didn't. To my astonishment, there existed religions other than Christianity. How could that be? A teeming profusion of beliefs became evident, with every one holding an adamant conviction. Every religion, every culture, every generation, every *person* had his own take. Strange. Did this bother nobody else?

As I got older, a couple of other things caught my attention. It seemed to me that church religion was disconnected from everyday life. Sin, sacrifice, and forgiveness were dry—even painful. Where did the trees, the wind, and sunshine fit? I thought that on warm Sunday mornings we should be outside, worshiping under the sky: God was obviously alive in the holiness of the natural world. Except in a few children's hymns, religion did not seem to recognize this.

Secondly, I felt a yearning that attending church did not ease. Services seemed like the *formal* recognition of God—a ceremony for God. I wanted inner connection but didn't understand what I was longing for.

I simply knew there was more.

By middle childhood, I began to feel that I was "bad." I thought that I must be bad because I wasn't perfect. Prayer and inspirational music touched me but did not make any difference to my life. I imagined that God was watching (yes, by now the cranky grandfather had seized my conscience) and was recording all my

sins. Awful things happened to people, and any day it could be my turn. I liked the *decorations* of religion—the music, the prayers, and getting dressed up, but inwardly, I was worried and confused. Every Sunday in church, I cringed with shame. Transgressions of the past week leapt into high relief. The cycle of sin, shame, and forgiveness was endless.

"There must be something to it that I just don't get," I thought.

Obviously, the character of God was central to the problem. Jesus was intriguing, but the real mystery, I knew, was God. When I was about six, I asked my mother what she felt inside when she prayed. I wanted to know if God communicated with her when she prayed, whether she could tell if her sins had been forgiven, and whether there was any relief to the longing: "Does aspiration lead to anything?" But I could not articulate this, so how could she understand me? Even so, her response surprised me; she said that prayer was personal—not something to be discussed.

So, if God was so important, why couldn't we talk about him? If God was our Father and Creator, why was he off-limits? But she proved to be right. Nobody ever talked about the personal aspect of God—not even in Sunday school or church.

I think it is important that we talk about God. *We have to sort this mess out!*

I, along with most children of traditional Christian upbringing, was exposed to the concept that God kept meticulous track of all transgressions. Punishment was imminent. To be fair, it was not my family or Sunday school teachers that taught this. A little Catholic friend told me about black spots on your soul and the perilous consequences—eternal damnation in burning hell! Yikes! (Why do we teach kids such things?) After a couple of years living in the menace of this belief, it occurred to me that *I* would not cause anyone to burn for a second, never mind *eternity*. How could it be that I was nicer than God? How could the creator of birds, flowers, and the glorious sky be *mean*? No, it was ridiculous. So I rejected the concept of hell. What a relief!

But this, of course, opened a whole new can of worms. Discarding one religious concept made me conscious of the rest of my beliefs. If I was going to disagree with the Bible, I'd better pay attention. I loved the stories of Jesus calling the children to him and curing sick people. These things made him seem kind and magical. His words were hard to understand, but that didn't bother me because Jesus had said that most people would not understand him. His actions were good.

Still, I could not make the connection between his sacrifice and my salvation. Free admission to heaven just for believing in Jesus struck me as implausible. I thought that believing in him meant whether or not he had *existed*. Was there actually a question about whether he had lived? Of course I believed in him. Why should that get me into heaven? It didn't make sense. What was I missing? I became alert to the idiosyncrasies of Christianity.

The summer I was eight I had an experience that, although it did not answer any of my questions, gave me some relief. One afternoon, in a quiet moment, I was lying on the grass staring up at the deep sky. Absorbed in this beauty, I slipped into a daydream. But this dream was vivid and came from a place above and to the right of my head. In a moment of clarity I perceived that *we are a dream*—that the universe is dreaming us. This concept washed over me, then the instant my intellect reached for more, the daydream retreated into the point from which it had come. The luminous clarity vanished. I tried to pull it back, but it was gone. Several times that summer and the next, when the sun and air were bright, I would lie in the same place and try to experience that brilliance again. I was not actually pursuing further spiritual insight because I did not understand what had happened to me. I just remembered that it felt wonderful.

In my search, it was inevitable that I would find solace with the holiest thing I knew. Even though I attended church, my authentic connection occurred with nature. The land north of Lake Superior where I grew up is a sparsely populated expanse of forest, lakes, and the Canadian Shield. Cast across the night

sky was the gift of the northern lights. As a child I was steeped in this beauty, and it naturally became central to my awareness of God. Nature *breathed* the truth.



Around the age of twelve, Anglican children attend religious classes in preparation for confirmation. I looked forward to it—finally, some answers. I anticipated spiritual revelations. I actually thought that secrets would be revealed. There *had* to be deeper wisdom.

But to my surprise and frustration, nothing was explained. Instead, we had to memorize the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and The Nicene Creed. The other kids were not mystified by sacrifice, judgment, forgiveness, and grace, or the pell-mell assortment of religions. I wanted to ask many questions: if you repeat a forgiven sin, is the first transgression still forgiven? Why do you need Jesus to forgive sins, if God knows everything? If we are all the children of God, how can Jesus be the only Son of God? Why did Jesus have to sacrifice himself for us to be forgiven?

Actually, I only asked one question, and I don't remember what it was, but I remember the answer was vague and insufficient. I wanted to know about aspiration and spiritual fulfillment. And I longed to know how it all fit together. *God had to make sense!*

But I was clearly getting vibes from the other kids, "Shut up, already!" By now I had earned the dreaded reputation of being "religious." Every kid knows that being religious is even worse than being a geek. So I shut up.

Not long after this disappointment in confirmation class, I read about reincarnation and karma—souls striving through life after life to attain perfection. I ran to my mother. "Look Mom, this makes sense!" But my mother was adamant. "You can't believe in reincarnation!" she said. "You are a Christian."

Oh.

Next, the concept that God was pure love came to my attention. It was part of the hippie philosophy. I remember sitting in my grade-eight classroom trying to figure out how God could *be* love. This was, by far, the most mystical concept that I had ever come across. Love is an intangible power, and pure love seemed unattainable—like God. But this theory was obviously contradicted by babies born into poverty and doomed to a life of suffering. How could the seemingly random misfortune that was part of earthly life be reconciled with a God of pure love?

In my teens I noticed the description of God as “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” Now, here was something. God, Jesus Christ, and a Holy Ghost made up all our souls. I imagined that the Holy Spirit consisted of the united souls of all the humans who had ever been born. This was immense, just as I expected God would be.

“Behold, the Kingdom of God is within” (Luke 17:21), Jesus had said. If my soul was, in reality, part of God, this explained my longing. I was separated from the Creator, and my spiritual urge was a natural desire to be reunited. Okay, I could live with that.

Approaching adulthood, I was fairly content with this interpretation. I could accept Jesus as a divine being sent to teach us. I had to believe. It was all I had. I resolved to try to live by the Golden Rule or ethic of reciprocity. It seemed fairly sensible that what I didn’t understand wouldn’t hurt me if I lived without harming others. I understood that being good was tied to my relationship with others—not to tradition or ritual. Instinctively, I felt that I was responsible for my own transgressions.

The fate of souls who lived good lives but did not follow Jesus still troubled me. If Jesus was the only “way,” what happened to those people? What did “way” mean? I knew there was more. I suspected that the answer was hidden in the name that God had revealed to Moses: “I Am that I Am” (Exodus 3:14). This was so profound that I could not even ponder it. I held it in my heart with my bright daydream. And secretly, I still believed in reincarnation.

It seemed to me that religions attempt to squeeze the truth into a box. Every denomination has its own box and diligently keeps the lid on tight. I could not believe a religion-in-a-box.

If I was going to believe something—it had to be logical. One part could not contradict another. Nature had to complement spirituality. Science had to embrace the mystical. I wanted to be Christian because I felt that Jesus was the real deal, but it bothered me that Christianity seemed unrelated to the rest of creation. The infinite complexity of the natural world was indisputable evidence of a bigger picture. The inconsistencies of religion clearly contradicted the holiness (and wholeness) so apparent in nature. It was utterly unthinkable that creation was two separate components—the universe and humanity—with the former designed as a set for the theatrics of the latter. I knew that the truth had to be so inclusive that it would make sense to every person. Eventually it dawned on me that truth does not engage in argument. It just exists. Truth is separate from our religions and is *magnificent*.



Then, when I was twenty, I discovered meditation. It was not part of my search for authentic spirituality—not consciously anyway. At the time I didn’t even think about meditation being a spiritual practice. Instead, I was stopped in my tracks by its effect on a friend.

At the end of my first year of university, I returned to Northern Ontario to work for the summer in a provincial park. It must have been a job, because they paid me. They paid me to walk a three-mile circuit of lakeside campsites every morning, checking to be sure each one had a valid permit. Every day I was nervous that I would be discovered to have missed the expired permits. I could tell you every bird, flower, and creature I had seen, but permits...?

Several times that summer, Michael, who was a couple of years older than I and whom I had known casually for years, rode his bike out to the park. He surprised me by stopping to talk. He would not have done that in the past. And he wasn’t flirting, either—just talking. It struck me that there was something different about him.

Although he had always been intelligent and fun, he'd had a cynical undertone to his personality. He was the kind of kid that is the centre of an exclusive clique. I had kept my distance. Suddenly he seemed genuinely nice—nonjudgmental and happy. I observed him all summer and could not sense a false note in his new personality. Intrigued, I confronted him. Why was he different? How had he changed?

He seemed to have been expecting the question. He told me that he had taken a meditation course. With reserved but genuine enthusiasm, he highly recommended it. Even though I had no idea what meditation was about, *without hesitation* I resolved to learn. Anything that had such a startling effect on someone had to be worthwhile.

So when we returned to university in the fall, I signed up. The course was called Inward Bound IV (meaning that for four days we explored our inner selves) and was offered by the group People Searching Inside or PSI, for short. Even thirty years later, I maintain that the \$129 from my meager student bank account is the best investment I have ever made. I learned about universal laws, the evolutionary force of kundalini and the meditation method called “Colours.” They taught that aspiration was the natural evolution of the soul. *The natural evolution of the soul?* This was the first time that I had come across the concept of aspiration being something real, never mind progressive and universal. The possibility of spirituality unfolding without boundaries and guilt was astonishing. And the idea that religions all had a common source...wow! This is what I had been looking for!



PSI was part of my life for a year. The next summer, I traveled to India with 250 people for a five-day conference with the renowned spirituality author Gopi Krishna. The focus of the conference was kundalini, which corresponds to the Christian concept of the Holy Spirit. But the theory of kundalini was so much more! Finally, the missing link between the natural and the mystical worlds!

Gopi Krishna spoke effortlessly, explaining cosmic truths more clearly than I had ever heard. A quiet, unassuming man in his late seventies, he spoke with conviction, personalizing the ancient mysteries. With simple humility he explained enlightenment, which he claimed was the state of his own transformed consciousness. And he emphasized the vital importance of the demystification of the phenomenon of kundalini. He asserted that knowledge of the kundalini process (explained at length in chapter 3) is the key to the safe evolution of the human race. His adamant desire was that science should study the physical-spiritual transformation of the most highly evolved human beings. He believed that by understanding our human birthright we would have a clear perspective with which to solve the intractable world mess. He asserted that the only hope for mankind was in spiritual maturity, and the way humanity could achieve this was to become aware of the natural physical-spiritual metamorphosis which we are all experiencing—and for mankind to be educated about the natural process of spiritual transformation.

After the conference some of the people from PSI returned to India to work with Pandit Krishna. I would have loved to go, but I was only twenty-one—too young. Anyway, “fate” had other plans for me. Back in Canada I made the decision to go into nursing. My new understanding of balancing the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects of living solidified my decision to pursue this vocation. At the same time, the intense pace of school gave me the perfect excuse to decrease my involvement in PSI. The tone of the group was changing. The leaders, perceiving themselves part of a divine mission, were attempting to exert influence over our personal lives. This was against the universal laws and their own philosophy. I agreed with their spiritual teaching, but not their behavior. So my brief excursion into New Age religion came to an end. I had been immeasurably enriched by learning the universal laws, kundalini, and how to meditate, but I was on my way.

A short time later my charmed life took a challenging turn. In the third month of my RN course, I discovered that I was pregnant. Like most young adults, my boyfriend and I had planned to establish careers and experience the freedom of being grown-up before marriage.

Instead, suddenly, we were married and expecting a baby. I was okay with this, but at the same time, it was difficult to see our dreams fade.

Our beautiful, little boy enthralled us. Being a mother was exhilarating beyond anything I could imagine. Even now, working with new parents, I love to watch the dawn of that ecstatic love. Some people literally shine with joy!

But as we settled into parenthood, the reality of our new life emerged. For my husband, the impact of the responsibility was devastating. In retrospect I understand that he was overwhelmed and could not share his fear with me. He withdrew. I interpreted his silence as loss of love and was devastated. The joy of motherhood was soon eclipsed by the reality of a crumbling relationship. Poor communication, financial strain, the responsibility of caring for a baby and going to school, combined with our immaturity, made the first years of our marriage turbulent. How quickly the situation escalated into a hornet's nest! In two short years my life was transformed from excitement and fun to exhaustion and anger—undoubtedly the recipe for divorce.

It was not until the situation was intolerable that it occurred to me to meditate. In the emotional turmoil, I had completely forgotten my PSI lessons. I had forgotten that I was in control and could affect the outcome of events by meditation. In desperation, I began to meditate again. What could I lose?

Admittedly my practice was sporadic but I was able to change my inner response to circumstances and maintain a stable home. Meditation gave me insight and strength. Slowly, slowly, I learned to remain passive and let the spiritual solution unfold. I learned to trust my inner self—and God. Our marriage continued to be tested, but it survived.

These hurdles are certainly not unusual. In fact, they are pretty tame in comparison to what others endure. But maybe that is the point. I started with a solid background and was given the tools to cope with any situation. Clearly, if I had messed up, there would have been no one to blame but myself. I believe that if I had not connected with my inner self—if I had taken the easier path and followed my baser inclinations—I would have lurched from one

difficulty to the next, dragging resentment and depression through my life. Instead—even though the challenges of young adulthood continued—our lives improved.



Colours of the Spirit is about spirituality in everyday life. It is about how our lives are expressions of the vast spirituality of existence. It draws together knowledge that supports a convincing picture of one truth—certainly not the whole truth, but at least an inclusive theory that reveals the common foundation of science and spirituality, the physical and philosophical. By this understanding, we can accelerate the evolution of our individual consciousness and, ultimately, of our whole race.

But this book is not just for “religious” people. I know that my liberal references to “God” and “spirituality” certainly give that impression, but I could substitute the words “life” and “universe” and not change the meaning at all. If you believe in life, then you believe in God. God *is* life. If you are striving to be the best person you can be, then you are aspiring. Aspiration is our inner spirit propelling forward. It's all semantics.

Colours of the Spirit is for any person who wants to live to his full potential. It is not complex or esoteric. It presents spirituality in a *practical* and *practicable* light. It explains why you would *want* to live spiritually. Contrary to popular belief, living spiritually is not pious and boring. It is not ascetic. Living spiritually is expansive and creative. It is music, sports, work, study, family, acquaintances, laughter and tears, illness and health...and sex. Spirituality is life.



This is a self-help book.
No, not another self-help book!

Yes. And it is the only self-help book you will ever need. The meditation method in this book, *Colour* meditation, was designed to help a person live by the universal laws. All meditation enhances consciousness and health, but *Colour* meditation directly addresses daily challenges, great and small. This technique can be used to solve any problem—it does not matter how complex or insurmountable it may seem.

For thirty years I have drawn unfailing strength and tangible benefit from meditation. I know that when life gets rocky, a spiritual solution is the only enduring answer. To be honest, it was not until I understood the long-term transformative benefits of meditation that it became a daily discipline. Without exception, *Colour* meditation has eased every difficulty that I have faced. As I watched friends and relatives struggle with similar problems, I wished that they could access the benefits of meditation. As their lives became more complicated and difficult, it was clear to me that *Colour* meditation would be valuable to all people, no matter what their spiritual beliefs.

A spiritual solution is the only true solution to any problem.

Living in harmony with the universe is living spiritually.



This is how *Colour* meditation works: In *Colour* meditation, each colour of the rainbow represents an aspect of spirituality. The seven aspects are love, faith, consciousness, physical life, truth, creativity, and aspiration. By relating these facets to a person's life, every day in meditation, they are purified and nurtured in one's character—gently, but resolutely, developed.

For example, the color red represents love. Daily affirmation of love strengthens compassion in the personality. The person

perceives events and people around him with a kinder attitude. His mindset is more loving, so he does not judge harshly.

Colour meditation slowly and surely transforms the personality. With deliberate, persistent practice the person becomes sensitive to the soft voice of his inner being. Meditation amplifies the inner voice and sharpens the ear. The person learns how to recognize the spiritual significance of *events of his own life*—not in relation to a religion, but in relation to himself. Spirit, thinking, emotions, and behavior are brought into harmony.

Harmony. This is the key. Meditation transforms the personality and nurtures inner peace. As we bring harmony to ourselves, we bring peace to our families. A person at peace affects friends and communities. Believe it or not, this is how peace will finally become a reality on planet Earth. World peace will only come about when individuals are peaceful. It is a mistake to expect that world leaders can create peace. Leaders cannot produce accord where there is strife within communities, families, and individuals. The unrest in our world is the result of our thinking. Are not all the atrocious acts that dominate the news every day perpetrated by individuals? Individuals, as part of families, cultures, gangs, and armies, are wreaking havoc.

The inverse of this is that individuals can bring about change. *We* can change the world. By nurturing our own hearts, one by one, we can bring a measure of peace to the world. The greater the number of people that practice spiritual living from their own place in the world, the more peaceful our earth will be. Your spirituality is as important to world peace as is the pope's, the Dalai Lama's, or that of a monk meditating in the Himalayas. World peace is you and I—and everyone else—being peaceful.



You must be the change you want to see in the world.

Mahatma Gandhi

Chapter 1

The Sorry Story of Religion

There are as many ideas of truth as there are human beings. Unavoidably, every single person has his own slant on the profound questions of life. First, children are exposed to their parents' religious ideas and traditions; some people inherit a compact doctrine, others a vague conglomerate of impressions. Every person assimilates and interprets then adjusts their beliefs as they mature. Socialization and experience are just as important in perceptions of reality as religious upbringing. Ordinary events percolate in our psyches with religion, socialization, ideas, and personality to create unique viewpoints. And tip-toeing most delicately, most nimbly, most persistently through every life is personal divinity.

Our beliefs have individual tints and shades, but for the most part we stick with the status quo. A Moslem child remains a Moslem throughout his life. A baby Christian grows up to be an adult Christian. We accept our religions as the truth just because we are born into them. Our parents tell us it is the truth, and we believe them—sort of.

By the time we are old enough to think critically, indoctrination is well established. In the struggle to make sense of it all, more religions and denominations are spawned. Since there does not seem to be absolute, indisputable proof of one spiritual reality, we accept this varied array of beliefs as unavoidable, clinging to our own as superior. Too bad that the other guy is so far off the mark! And with the apparent randomness and injustice of the world, it seems easier (and safer, just in case God really is a temperamental, old man) to function within an organized religion, than to question too emphatically.

Those who do seek, who are unable to accept religion-in-a-box, are frustrated, even tortured, with doubt—so many viewpoints,

contradictions, theories, and concepts. What is right? Who is right? Can there be so many legitimate perspectives of the truth? Does it matter?

Gopi Krishna writes in his book *Cosmic Consciousness*:

If the mass of literature of each religion is studied, and a comparison is made of the revelations and beliefs...it would disclose a state of anarchy in the spiritual realm that has no parallel in any other sphere of human thought.

(Krishna 1974, 56)

“A state of anarchy,” indeed! In all other aspects of human interest, knowledge is researched and shared. Only in spirituality does such a free-for-all persist.

When compared, it is obvious that the major world religions share fundamental concepts. The belief in one god is central: a god of love who wants us to care for our neighbors. Also prevalent are beliefs in the soul, aspiration, revelation, and the afterlife. Why is it that our religions contain so many similar concepts in different packages?

Most people who believe in God would agree that there is only one god; the god of Christians, Jews, Hindus, Aborigines, and Moslems is the divine source. They agree that their god is the same god that is worshipped by people of other faiths, yet they feel that their own concept is more authentic. Why do most people suppose that their own religion portrays the only true version of truth? Many people even emphatically defend the beliefs of their own *sect* as irrefutable. A moment of reflection by a thoughtful person will reveal the absurdity of such thinking.



It is obvious that man creates religions. Eons ago, there we were, isolated from each other in scattered pockets of population, cold, hungry, ignorant... We drew together into communities for

survival and then into groups for mutual support. These groups perpetuated ceremony and tradition. Over time our creativity has resulted in the cultures and customs of today, including our spiritual expression.

To the ancient mind the divine presence was obvious in the natural world and mystery around us—whether as a single god or many gods and goddesses. “God” was undeniably enormously powerful...and strict. Violent natural phenomena and disease attested to that. Nobody wanted to displease this god. Protection and bountiful harvests were sought. Questions of philosophy were way down on the list of priorities.

Since this mighty deity was so mysterious, anyone who claimed to understand what he “wanted” was not ignored. Who else to turn to but those who had had mystical experiences or who could read the words of someone who had? But unfortunately, even the person who’d had a mystical experience might not understand its deeper meaning. The ability to read certainly did not guarantee that the person had the insight to interpret. Then there were political considerations. Undisputedly, broader influence was affected by the materialistic, social, egotistical, and control considerations of the power elite. Ah, the intrigue!

Then, every few centuries, spiritual understanding was revolutionized by the input of authentically spiritual individuals: Krishna, Moses, Jesus, Buddha, and Mohammed. These figures were so remarkable that the religions that grew from their inspiration exert immense influence to this day.

Inevitably however, traditions, ritual, superstition, and dogma accumulated around these men’s teachings. Words that originated from a spiritual perspective were understood with literal interpretation. Centuries of struggle, domestic as well as political, have left the world in philosophical confusion. Astonishingly, we accept this array of beliefs and do not think about how we came to this, or how spiritually absurd it is. What audacity to define the indefinable Absolute by our feeble comprehension!

As the spirit moved in the hearts of people everywhere, they drew into religious communities, at the same time separating themselves from other groups. When people worshipped together, their emotions stirred. A bond grew. Aspiration intensified. Inspiration occurred and beliefs were mistakenly credited as the source of the inspiration.

For example, a Christian who had revered Jesus all of his life would naturally interpret an inner vision of a mounting dove as a definitive affirmation of his faith. A devout Moslem would interpret the euphoria of chanting as an indication of the presence of Allah. An aboriginal worshipper would interpret the behavior of a raven or an eagle to have holy implications. This experience must be the result of “right” belief. And each of these people would feel blessed to have received such favor.

Here is an interesting observation: A devotee’s spiritual experience always coincides with his existing paradigm. A Christian’s mystical experience corresponds to his interpretation of Jesus’s doctrine—he would see a vision of Jesus or the Virgin Mary. He would not see Mother Kali or Buddha. Because the experience is so powerful, he would undoubtedly conclude that the institution that propagated his beliefs must be correct. If Christianity were not the truth, why would he have seen the Christ? His faith in his own religion intensifies, while the conviction that the spiritual experiences of people who follow other faiths are imagination or fabrication is most likely strengthened.

But even better than being part of a group is to be part of the *right* group—to feel *chosen*. Many religions, despite expounding the unity of mankind, also insist on the superiority of their own doctrine. They encourage the belief, or worse, blatantly teach that they are the selected ones and have the holy duty to draw the rest of humanity to salvation under their banner. We all know what that attitude has produced: spiritual pride, prejudice, subjugation, suicide bombers, and wars!

The general consensus within a religion is: “You have the feeling of expanded spirituality because you have adopted our beliefs.

You are special now. You can tell by your feeling of aspiration.” So grow religions. So grow the rifts between religions.



Religions are knitted into the fabric of our lives. They provide ceremony for every passage—birth, puberty, marriage, and death. They are woven through our cultures, and our cultures define us. Societal traditions give our lives structure and expression. It is the *traditions* of each religion that we cling to. We are bound to our roots; beliefs we can nonchalantly modify or discard at our own convenience. Even for those who have doubts, it is advantageous to accept the status quo and get on with it.

But something is happening. Mankind is beginning to wake up. Like sunbeams breaking through the clouds of a rainy sunrise, a new mind-set is dawning. People are beginning to recognize that “God” meets us on our own ground. We sense mystical compulsion when we have one set of beliefs as well as when we have changed our opinion. We are beginning to recognize that people of all faiths have the same compelling communion. Profound inner experience cannot be caused by an individual’s beliefs when beliefs are so varied and fluid. If people from every religion make personal connections with the Divine, it follows that the truth of the universe is greater than any set of beliefs. Divinity is infinite, and therefore is revealed in an infinite number of ways.



Evidence that spirituality is growing in maturity is obvious by the acceptance of the legitimacy of all religions within Western culture. Remember the controversy that erupted in Canada several years ago when a Sikh man joined the Royal Canadian Mounted Police? Should he wear a turban or a Stetson? Today, a Mountie in a turban does

not even turn heads. My children go to school with Hindu, Moslem, Sikh, Native, and Jewish kids. They learn the traditions and beliefs of the other religions. More importantly, they are taught the *validity* of those beliefs. This is a gargantuan change to have occurred in just one generation. When I was little, the two denominations of Christianity in our community maintained a decisive tension. All things Catholic and Protestant were kept apart. And these lessons began early.

When I was about three years old a Catholic family with girls about the same ages as we were, moved in two doors away. Our mother sent us out to play with them. Before five minutes had passed, their mother called them inside. The next time we tried to play with them, they threw rocks at us. That put a decisive end to any potential friendships. Those girls did not spontaneously decide to hate us. Prejudices were actively passed from generation to generation. I don't think my two little sisters even knew the names of the younger girls in that family.



While we grew up in churches that defined our social influences, much of this generation has a casual connection, or no connection at all, to spiritual community. The parameters of religion seem unclear, with beliefs blending and blurring. Perhaps baby boomer parents faltered in their responsibility to pass on strict religious structure. Maybe we were too indulgent with our kids, neglecting to instill guilt and fear. Maybe the kids were exposed to so much knowledge that religion was demoted to the status of “ideas” rather than “truth.” Maybe it was because we were too tired to get up for church every Sunday morning. Or maybe we didn't really believe it all. I don't know, but I recognize that a lot of kids these days are unencumbered by entrenched beliefs and are searching for spirituality that resonates. They want spiritual communities that are authentic. They intuitively recognize that religious institutions are places to share and worship, not to *get* spirituality or to appear spiritual. They know that they must *live* spirituality. Increasingly,

people feel more comfortable going it alone rather than squeezing their beliefs into one of the traditional boxes. Survey after survey show that people who profess strong spiritual inclination are staying away from churches in droves. Spiritual institutions are struggling to be creative—to bring these people back—but a prescribed set of beliefs that separates them from others is not what people want. They refuse to join clubs that peddle packaged guilt and superiority complexes.



Religions are formal sets of beliefs—interpretation of scriptures and ideas, supported by ritual. Religions are debatable.

Spirituality is not religion; it is the awareness of inner Presence.

We are alive, and this intangible life force is a mystery that bonds us to each other and to the ultimate truth. Everything that has life is part of this mystery; aliveness is our common denominator.

Those who question, longing to understand how it all makes sense, are beginning to see that organized religion is superfluous. People are realizing that it is the *opening of the heart in devotion* that draws the experience of spiritual connection. When a heart cries—whatever its religion or beliefs: the universe responds. Christian rapture, aboriginal visions, Buddhist peace, Hindu trance, and Moslem devotion have the same source. They are the same experience filtered through individual consciousness. The soul stirs when a person turns his attention to the Divine.

The peace of God which passeth all understanding (Philippians 4:7) is the surge of soul-thrill. Holy joy is accessible to all who open their consciousness to it. It is natural and universal and is experienced with passionate aspiration. Unfortunately, in mainstream

western religions, it is not generally understood that the soul has a *universal* response to the love of God; instead each religion perpetuates the belief that its view of the truth provokes soul-thrill because it uniquely represents the Truth.

A pure, aspiring heart will thrive in any religion.

It is my assertion that whatever the truth is, it remains constant, unaffected by what we believe. For the sake of our anguished world, we must free ourselves from injurious doctrine. We must accept that one truth encompasses all of humanity. And we do not have to discard our religions, but instead search within them for pure spirituality. The truth in one religion will not contradict another. Truth will not propagate fear, abuse, or pride. Intellectually, we are becoming too advanced for the paternalistic, vengeful god of traditional theologies. Our religions have to grow up. Religion cannot stop the movement of Spirit.

Universal truth is beyond imagination and comprehension—but not common sense.

“God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). “In spirit and truth”—this means that we must open our hearts to the awareness of our own spirit when we worship. We must feel our love and longing and accept universal love. We must live in *awareness* of divine presence within us. In this profound communion, there are no words. Then, “in truth” we must bring spirit into our daily lives. What is communicated inwardly must become the truth that we live. We must become aware of the inner connection to the divine spirit in our lives.

The soul stirs within our psyches, and when this movement is nurtured, it grows stronger. It transforms consciousness. Spirituality is our consciousness, evolving.

Spirituality is our consciousness, evolving.



**The world citizens know what things to do,
But do not know what to become.**

Sri Chinmoy