

CLARITY

Newsletter of 7C Life Realization Centre Group of Companies

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UP COMING EVENTS

- Mind Focus Meditation Sessions (Monday to Friday: 7.45 pm – 9.00 pm and Saturday: 9.30 am – 10.45 am)
- Speaker Series #4: Cyberworld's Psychological Impact – 22 June 2019

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



Figure 1: HH SwamiGuru and members of the Retreat to Nature Mulberry Hill by The Lodge, Bandung, Indonesia (3-5 May 2019)

Greetings!

Our 'Retreat to Nature – a '5-elements' Experience' was a resounding success and Constance Westwood has generously shared the impact it had on her in her story, 'Unity'. Catherine shares

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what happened during our somewhat animated debate on 'A True Guru, A True Seeker' which was held on 30 April. I was fascinated by how, with very little effort on our part, the sunflower played a huge role in many of our activities in the last two weeks. I decided to write about all this in 'The Journey of a Flower' and hope you like the story.

If you'd like to share your stories with us, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Life is simple.

Aneeta Sundararaj
Head of Corporate Communications
7C Life Realization Centre Groups of Companies

UNITY

By Constance Westwood



No way can I say that I have gone through any hardships in life. How blessed I have been to have had wonderful parents who never grudged me anything; sisters who cared for their 'baby' in the family – even now; a loving and trusting relationship with so much care and respect. I have had a fantastic journey so far pursuing what I wanted in my materialistic life. Throughout, loving individuals showered me with so much devotion and often unrequited care.

Everything came ever so easily.

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Growing up as a Catholic was all about going to mass every week and doing the rituals as expected. With the fear of Hell and Purgatory firmly planted by the nuns while growing up, I had vivid visions of life that was filled with fire and endless punishment. Yet, something was missing. I had so many questions about life, so many gnawing doubts about my faith, so many hopeless searches to quell this unsatisfied empty feeling within.

More so during these past ten years when I have tried to find peace within myself knowing that my soul needed nourishment and meaningful direction whilst on Earth. Funnily enough I turned to the Gurus of India for enlightenment who welcomed me with open arms, guiding me to seek the true nature of my soul.

A recent chance encounter with HH SwamiGuru and a meditative evening with the family at the 7C Realization Centre engulfed me with so much peace within. The 'Retreat to Nature' at Bandung from 3 to 5 May 2019 was a welcome enticement to be in His company, get more insights into my soul, spend more time with many new faces and really seek my true purpose on Earth.

When in Bandung, I immersed myself in all the different sessions with no qualms except for the experience at the waterfall. Many questions came to my thoughts, many messages went through my mind, some through HH SwamiGuru's words, some through the many new friends I got to know, some through my own realisation, and funnily enough, through unexplained sights and smells.

Indeed, I have come to realise and admit that I tend to devote myself too much to others' needs that I forget or neglect my own. Henceforth, a few new rules.

Rule No: 1 – Care for yourself even more, before you do for others. At the same time, I have a tendency of starting things with so much enthusiasm but not completing them properly.

Rule No: 2 – Stop being lazy, have the determination to start and finish with the same zeal and enthusiasm.

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Rule No: 3 – Don't talk and not do. Like a true PR practitioner, am very clever to craft words with seemingly strong intentions BUT they all whisper and wither away like mists when confronted by warm winds!

Two words came to my mind when we were doing the Gratitude Session. First was 'Determination' as I seem to have the zeal BUT when it comes to putting it to practice, I procrastinate and flounder, finding excuses to delay things...there will always be another time, another hour, another day. No more of such laziness.

"Do it and shame the Devil," as the Nuns used to tell us.

The second word 'Unity' flashed across my mind, and this is what I had shared with my team members. Being united with the Divine and having that infinite trust that he would help guide my footsteps and remaining time on Earth. Of which, I have come to realise that this is the best approach with the least of unnecessary worries and grandiose expectations, too.

So, during the next 21 odd days, it will be a time of much realisation.

In my own little way, I think I have started to see measurable changes wherein whatever I say or do, I try and complete it, no matter how much the physical body aches of all that walking up and down the hills of Mulberry Hill by The Lodge, not forgetting up and down the steep hills to the waterfall.

Let the journey take on a more defined and purposeful course, let the mind be determined and filled with good thoughts that translate into positive activities, let the intentions be true for the soul's development, let the Divine be a significant part of my remaining journey on this Earth and Lifetime.

Thank you, HH SwamiGuru; thank you Aneeta; thank you to my family at 7C.

Om Shanti.

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TRUE GURU, TRUE SEEKER

By Catherine Yong

When you think of spirituality and religion, you may turn to books, scriptures, workshops or the Internet to find out more. Some will look for a person, a 'Guru', to tell you what is right or wrong, and essentially guide you to live better lives.

Even when you've found that Guru, you are not alone in wondering if that particular person is a true Guru. Embarrassed at having such thoughts at all, you wonder if it makes you any less a seeker. Are you a failure in the eyes of the Guru and the rest of His students? Should you be criticised, belittled or ostracised? Would you dare to voice such thoughts in public, or worse, in the presence of the Guru?

Well, on 30 April 2019, at 7C Life Realization Centre, these doubts and thoughts were aired aloud during a dialogue session with HH SwamiGuru called 'A True Guru'. Included in this was a debate between a group of selected people on the following topics, namely:

- What is the meaning of a true Guru and what stops you from accepting a true Guru?
- What is the meaning of a true Seeker and what stops you from being one?

Consisting mainly of graduates of our 2018 Mindfulness Masterclass Programme, (Vicknesh, Malini, Aneeta, Veejay, Rakesh and Mohan) the teams took turns to share their ideas, thoughts and experiences they have undergone on their journey towards the true Guru. At the end of the debate, HH SwamiGuru weighed in with His thoughts, opinions and answers.

A TRUE GURU. OR, A TRUE GURU?

The first answer was derived from a previously published article where the Guru is regarded as the guide who teaches the Seeker. The Seeker is aware that what awaits him is eternal communion with the Divine. However, until he reaches that point, he will enjoy the journey with the Guru who will make sure that he does not fall into metaphorical holes that may appear along the way. He enjoys the walk with the Guru and surrenders all fears and worries to Him.

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The second answer was that a true Guru is someone who made the effort to bring about a change in you. He would never walk away from the Seeker and does all He can to bring out the best in the Seeker. The example given here was the ability to speak in public. With a Guru's grace, one could speak in public full of confidence and without fear.

The third person on Team 1 sought to go deeper – the Seeker often looked for a Guru for spirituality. As the messenger of the Divine, the true Guru guided a Seeker to receive a Guru's blessing, thereby, *moksha*. This was done through the practice of *pooja*, *dhyanam* and *bhakti*.

The counter arguments began with the idea that if a Seeker falls into a pothole along his journey, then so be it. If he encounters another hole along the way and does not avoid it, then the Seeker has obviously learnt nothing from the Guru. For the one who spoke confidently in public, the retort was, "If you can't talk in public, just join Toastmasters." And for the last, the response was, "Everyone around us is a Guru. So why get stuck to only one?"

A TRUE SEEKER AND WHAT STOPS YOU FROM BEING ONE.

In spite of having recognised someone as a true Guru, what stops a Seeker from total acceptance? This question and its answers are as old as time. In the Christian faith, even though Peter and Judas experienced the miracles of Christ, listened to his teachings and experienced the existence of Christ in a personal way, history still labels them as traitors. They were, in the end, fallible. Keep these in mind so as not to be surprised by the answers you read below.

For a start, a true Seeker learns to listen and be sincere to his Self. He needs to surrender in totality and believe that his Guru is taking him on the right path. He feels the blessings of the Guru every moment of the day and has faith and belief that everything in life is happening in Divine order.

What stops a person from being a true Seeker are the external pressures. With job and family stress, obligations to fulfil within the community, it can be impossible to completely follow a true Guru. Why spend precious time venerating a Guru? In this internet age, if the advice or counsel is needed,

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there's always Google. Besides, there are way too many gurus in the world these days. Worse, some of them preach, but do not practice what they preach.

Some Seekers admit that they cannot understand what the Guru is saying; so, putting the teachings into practice becomes hard. There are those who feel that whatever success the Seeker achieves is through his own merit. Why, then, give the Guru any credit?

After hearing both teams present their respective points, HH SwamiGuru shared His views, which are paraphrased below.

THE TRUE GURU WEIGHS IN



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If you see the Guru as the physical being and that's what he teaches you, you are with the wrong Guru. A true Guru is one who teaches through Him, not by Him. If it's by Him, He's interpreting. Let's use this example. Where are you hearing my voice from? The speakers, yes? Are these speakers speaking to you? It's through those speakers that you hear my voice. Who is speaking? I am. Similarly, if the Divine is speaking, it's through me; I am like those speakers. You need to understand the value of such a speaker.

The true Guru will learn when He teaches and imparts knowledge unconditionally. The true Seeker is someone who has learnt how to learn. He has acquired the knowledge and, when he applies it to his life, he becomes wise. There is no separation between the Guru, the Teaching, the Seeker and the Divine.

The Guru is an example of that Divine teaching and that's why He can be a Guru to you. He also wants you to be the Teaching so that you will also become a Guru. So, if you

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leave after learning all you can from one Guru, the Guru will not become angry. It's OK for the Teaching to be propagated by multiple Gurus and the true Guru will never feel offended.

The Guru can have all of divinity in him. He can also project Divine energies to you. But His physical being is not the Divine. A coffee can have sweetness that comes from sugar. You can enjoy the sweetness of the coffee, but however much sugar you add to the coffee, it will never become the sugar itself. The more the Guru is connected to the Divine, the more He becomes the embodiment of the Divine, but he is not the Divine.

Divinity is experienced from living. I can read a cooking book to you, a million times, but if you are not allowed to taste the food, then what is the point? The true Guru guides you to taste the food. You, as the Seeker, needs to live to experience such Divinity.

In essence, a true Guru doesn't need to declare Himself as a Guru. It is the Seekers who've sought out his Teachings who recognise him as a true Guru. He will not ask you to forego your ambitions or goals, but ask, instead, that you live and experience the life that you have. Do this with happiness and joy within.

And that's how you recognise a true Guru and a true Seeker.

THE JOURNEY OF A FLOWER

By Aneeta Sundararaj

You wait with anticipation for your date to arrive. On tenterhooks, you pace up and down in your flat. You rush to a nearby mirror. Is your hair in place? Is the outfit the right colour? Maybe, the outfit is not right. Perhaps, you should change.

The doorbell rings.

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Oh no! There's no time. He's here.

You open the door and there's this man standing on your doorstep. All suited and booted, he looks debonair. But what's this he's holding?

It's not a rose. Or even your favourite, orchids. Surely, he'd have made more of an effort than this – a single sunflower with a pretty red ribbon.

All manner of thoughts run through your head.

This man doesn't care for me.

We've known each other for so long and he brought me *this*?

A sunflower for God's sake.

Surely a rose wouldn't have cost that much.

Oh my God! This man is poor.

You look at the gentleman's face. He's grinning.

Idiot!

You move to shut the door, but he puts his hand up to stop you. He tells you a story and your heart skips a beat. Then he says something and you practically fall into his arms.

What did this gentleman say?

Well, this was the cliff-hanger moment that Brenda James presented us with at the start of our Speaker Series ('Making Your Money Work for You') on 11 May 2019. She told us, instead, her history. Born and brought up in Ipoh, Perak, Brenda completed reading Law before she began her career in the corporate world. Although she became financially secure, she felt miserable. By 2008, she made the decision to start Nook Flowers in Bangsar South. With the realities of running her own business were also painful and humiliating lessons. Throughout, the one quality she retained was her optimism.

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One of the most wonderful stories that Brenda shared echoes our focus on being happy, spreading such happiness through the work we do and the people we've become. Straightening her shoulders, Brenda gives a bright smile and explains that when she's done with an arrangement, she'll hold it in her hands and whispers, "Go, make someone happy." Saying these words, she believes, results in the transmission of happy thoughts and feelings to those flowers. In turn, the final recipient receives not only the flowers, but the sentiments too.

As expected, generating such happiness always has a spill-over effect on other aspects of one's life. Even though Brenda was barely making ends meet, she remained determined to look at the brighter side of life and joined the Philharmonic Society of Selangor. Having derived much contentment from this activity, Brenda smiles even brighter when she reveals that it's through the choir that she met her husband.

Perhaps, the most synchronous moment of this Speaker Series session came about during the Q & A session. The questions ranged from 'Is it OK to use white flowers for Mother's Day?' and 'Why do we like lilies when they are flowers used during funerals in the West?' to a point about chrysanthemums having a bad reputation because they were regarded as 'prayer flowers'.

It is when Brenda said something along the lines of, "How amazing is it that a flower can be used to glorify the Divine," that many of us who'd gone on the recent retreat to Bandung, Indonesia felt a shiver run down our spine. This was precisely what HH SwamiGuru had alluded to on 5 May 2019, during the last discourse of the retreat. In His words:

"The journey of the flower is meant to enhance the understanding of learning to live as naturally as possible without having to compare your life with that of others. It is only then that you'll understand the greatness of creation, the creator and creativity. With that understanding, you will realise that life is all about being yourself and not someone else. You have been endorsed by the Divine to be 'you'. Don't be someone else and don't seek someone else's endorsement for who you are. This journey can only be successful if you first make an

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effort to find your true non-contaminated self. In so doing, you will also realise the power of gratitude and the blessings of life.”



Incidentally, the flower of choice during our retreat was a genus of sunflower. Now that we're back to talking about this giant yellow palmful of sunshine, let's return to the tale of the gentleman who brought his lady love a sunflower.

The story he tells her before she falls into his arms is that in Greek mythology, Apollo was the Sun God who rode his golden and ivory chariot from east to west every day. A water nymph called Clytie was in love with Apollo, but it was unrequited. For nine days, unblinking, she watched him move across the sky. Eventually, she was turned into a flower which came to be known as the Sunflower.

The gentleman then looked into his lady love's eyes and said, "The sunflower is the only one that follows the movement of the sun. Even if there is the slightest glimmer of light in the sky, the sunflower will turn its head to find it. And that's how I feel about you."

Sigh!

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