

# Doing From a Higher Place of BEING:

## *Discovering ONENESS in Everyday Life*

By Chip Richards

*5:51 am. Pre-sunrise glow climbs in the bedroom window, stirring me awake. Warm and sleepy. The idea of pulling myself out of the bed cocoon is like extracting a wisdom tooth. Maybe I could just close my eyes for another five minutes... Snuggle back in with Ashejana and Joshy (my wife and little boy). I won't fall back asleep... I just need a few more minutes to drift... But I know how easily five minutes of "drifting" can turn into an hour (or more) of over-sleep. And I told Him I'd meet Him at the water by 6:20 – in time for sunrise. He's always on time. Usually early in fact, waiting there with a smile. So I pry myself out of the womb and into motion. I grab a piece of fruit, my wetsuit and surfboard and head out the door.*

*As I drive to the beach, my mind floods with thoughts of the dreams I just left and the day I'm moving towards – tasks that need doing, bills that need paying, people who need to be called, emailed, etc. Tons to do. So much in fact, that the last thing I should be doing is going surfing. Halfway there, I pause at a stop sign and almost turn back. I should just go home and get to work. He knows how busy my schedule is. He'd understand. But still... He'll be there, waiting. So I continue on. I reach the beach just a few minutes before the sun.*

*Jogging down the path, my busy mind is distracted by the morning call of whip birds. Wading through the shallows, the urgencies and schedule for the day seem to flush from the seams in my wetsuit. As I paddle my way out, I hear only the sound of my own breathing, the board gliding across glassy water, waves peeling away on the sandbank. I reach a field of blue velvet just beyond the break and stop to catch my breath. Where's my friend? I look around for a moment... He's everywhere. The dancing crystals on the water. The northwest breeze up my back. The shafts of light piercing the horizon... And the perfect wave building right before me! I turn and paddle. A moment of solo effort and I feel myself being lifted onto his shoulder. I stand and we soar down a hallway of crystal green light. Motionless, but flying. I finish the ride near the beach and paddle back out with ten times more energy than I had before. My sleepy resistance to rising, my busy*



*mind and surface life worries have all been transformed into pure light and energy.  
Oceanic osmosis. In this moment I am ONE.*

Several years ago, I attended a great classic meditation workshop in Melbourne. Over five days, we explored some of the main traditional forms of meditation and spent the majority of each day with lights off, practicing. About halfway through the course I began to make a connection between my peak moments of connection in the room and some of the special moments of “flow” I have experienced in nature, immersed in favourite life activities. Surfing in the early hours, skiing in the trees, drumming with a friend. I asked the course facilitator about this and he said that those activities were nice, but if it wasn’t classic meditation, it wasn’t real meditation. I frowned thoughtful and returned to my seat. But I had my doubts...

Since then I have had many very powerful experiences in “classic” meditation and structured prayer, and I have also had a host of truly meditative and spiritual experiences in nature and life. Both providing powerful gateways into a higher way of being... In recent years as I have been immersed in fatherhood, I realize that we are indeed born with the ability and natural tendency to connect and attune to the Source. I have learned so much as I watch my son Joshua engage in simple activities like dribbling his basketball, holding a baby animal or drawing a picture with a stick at the beach. The stick carves into the wet sand and suddenly all laughter and chattering cease. His breathing deepens and you can literally feel his darting mind empty as he settles in with pure, focused intent. A thousand miles away, yet totally present and connected. Several minutes later he emerges with a huge inhale and a grin (stick figure dolphin under foot) – as though he’s just emerged from the depths of the Sea of Life itself!

Every religion and spiritual sect has it’s own curriculum for spiritual ascension. Within them are a myriad of tools, methods and approaches to “attaining” spiritual unity. I have studied and participated in several such forms, and indeed found truth at the centre of most. But I have also come to deeply appreciate and honour the spiritual school that exists within our very beings and the natural flow of our every day life. For centuries, we have been conditioned to view

enlightenment and true oneness with God as unattainable. 'Out there' somewhere, for only the chosen few to experience, instead of where it really is – in our very core from before we arrive. Waiting to be uncovered and expressed as our normal way of BEING.

What is meditation, but a tool to transport us from a state of “doing” into a state of “being”? Whether drawing a picture, surfing a wave or sitting in silence in nature, we all have our own ways of “dropping in” to connection and oneness. The time, place and ways we connect are what make us unique. Our Creator would have it no other way. Indeed, every snowflake is different. In this light, all activities that captivate our focus and attention in positive ways (physically, mentally and/or spiritually) can be seen as opportunities to seek, connect and express our Higher Self – our Christ Self – in our own unique way. This is God, BEING ME.

When we learn a new skill or embark on a new project (playing a musical instrument, building a house, mothering a child), while there may be certain levels of intuitive flow from the beginning, early efforts often feel awkward, overwhelming and un-natural. The process of learning how to ride a bike for example is quite complex when first attempted. So many things to think about! Even for those who slot in quite naturally, if the aim is to achieve a high level of competency, there will always be thresholds and stages of learning. Times of effort and overwhelm, when our mind, body or spirit enters a process of expansion. In these times we may take our cues from others, or follow tried and tested techniques. But ultimately to achieve a sense of mastery, we must discover the best way for our own bodies to perform and flow with the task. We practice everyday, sometimes ALL day, every day. And over time, we attune to the movements. Our skills reach a place where we no longer need to consciously think about the specifics of what we are doing. It just happens. As we connect to this level of flow in the activity, time disappears. Hours pass by in minutes. Thoughts fade, and the movement or process of doing flows in us like a river. Effortless.

We have all cultivated this feeling of flow at one time or another in sport, work, creative expression, nature or with a loved one. In these moments we are not concerned with results, with achieving a certain end or what will happen next. We are simply and purely in the moment. Connected. Coincidentally, these also happen to be the moments of greatest performance and truest creation. When nothing is forced, and no ulterior motive is asserted. This complete immersion in a single act transports us from the process of *doing* into an open and expanded state of *being*. We go from playing the drum, to being one with the rhythm. From surfing on the wave to being part of the wave itself. From performing acts of love to feeling as though we embody love. Dynamic, powerful and expressive, yet totally natural and unforced.

Amidst the fast pace of modern society, most of us seek these activities of sport and art as hobbies in our “free time”, and view them as escapes or releases from the “real world”. These moments of oneness and connection are cherished, but quickly forgotten as we dress back up in our roles and march into the often out-of-balance and disconnected lives we have come to view as “normal”. For some strange reason we have come to accept relative disharmony and imbalance – in work, relationships, and even our physical bodies – as an ordinary way of life, and we view times of heightened experience of connection as extraordinary exceptions to the rule. In fact we have the whole equation flipped upside down! These special moments of flow that we currently find in glimpses show us a sense of oneness and individual divinity that is available to all of us, all of the time. These moments of true connection, in whatever activity we choose, are signs of how our life, and our communion with our Creator is meant to be.

### **Honour the Gift of Individuality**

The first step is to recognize and fully appreciate the essence of ONENESS that we already experience in one or more areas of our life. Realize that the higher consciousness and unity we seek on the outside ALREADY exists within, and it reveals itself to us in these simple and passionate life pursuits. This is in fact the true purpose of these pursuits. They are the “training wheels” on our bike of spiritual oneness. They give us the experience of riding the bike (oneness) to help us grow into and wake up to who we really are.

While we can certainly learn a lot from others, we must ultimately find and celebrate our own individual passions and unique modes of flow. The Universe gave us our bodies, our lives, our gifts and talents. Our gift back to the Universe is the unlimited acceptance and dynamic expression of these gifts. To be who we are to the absolute maximum. As John Randolph Price so eloquently states in The Jesus Code, “You came into this life with your piece of the puzzle, and this world would not be complete without you and your contribution to the whole cosmic process... Yes, you do have a mission, and you can fulfil it only by being yourself.”

### **Spreading the Light**

In the Japanese martial art of Aikido, the achievement of black belt is considered the “first step” – the entry point to a much deeper and expanded realm of experience. Likewise, our mastery of any endeavour – be it classic meditation, motherhood or a hike in the woods – must not be seen as the end result but as the starting point. The second step is to carry the essence and energy of these special experiences into other areas of our life. To ride our training-wheeled bike out of the driveway and peddle around the neighbourhood. As I once heard a Buddhist monk say, “Meditation is not sitting on a cushion.” Meditation is in the way we hold ourselves, breathe, speak and move in LIFE. The key is not how well you can meditate or surf or drum or make love, but how well you carry that energy and light into your daily endeavor.

One way to initiate this transfer is to seek the quiet rhythm of connection in areas of our life that we may normally rush through or take for granted. The so-called distractions and chores of life – washing the dishes, raking the yard, driving to work – when done with the right spirit, offer an absolute wellspring of oneness potential. By giving our mind and body a simple task to conduct (i.e. scrub a frying pan) we free up our spirit to rise to the surface. This often occurs naturally in the time immediately following an activity we love (i.e. driving home from the beach), but this feeling can be cultivated anytime.

Some people are intimidated by meditation, claiming that they can never fully quiet their mind. This is no reason not to try. If it takes most or all of a meditation session to settle and connect, then perhaps the purpose of that particular session is simply to make room for higher thoughts, impulses and actions waiting to surface in our life. My wife Ashejana often complains of not being able to stop the chatter of her mind during a meditation, only to emerge 20 minutes later with a truly amazing idea or creative, loving impulse. I have come to appreciate this process, and now smile at her temporary frustration, knowing that something special is surely on the way! We must never pre-judge or underestimate the benefit that comes from our genuine attempts to connect with our divinity. When our intent is pure and for the good of all, there will always be a measure of new light to glean and share with others.

### Ripples of the Wave

When we begin to recognize the essence of oneness in our life's activities, we know it is time to take the training wheels off and ride the bike as it is meant to be ridden. EVERYWHERE. As we move beyond the simple joy of oneness as experienced in and around specific activities, we open ourselves to the river of flow and connection that exists at the core of all our relationships, experiences and life itself. Our life becomes a prayer of connection and a song of unity. As Gabriel Cousins states in Spiritual Nutrition and the Rainbow Diet, "Ultimately, when we become one with the knowledge of meditation, every moment of our life becomes a meditation, a love communion with God."

At the very core of the message of Jesus and other enlightened beings is the notion that we are ALL ONE. Deep inside, we are already ascended masters, fully connected and at ONE with God. Limitless by our very nature. The only question is how much we accept this gift, how much we recognize and express our own Christ essence in our lives. *"Don't worship me. Do as me. Don't put me on a pedestal. Join me on the stage. All these things I have done, you will do, and more. I am just showing you the way. Do as I have done, in your own way. In fact, you already are! You just don't realize it."*

*As beautiful and colourful and dynamic as God made all the world  
of animals and waves and sunrises and clouds,*

*of mountains and birds and sand and shells,  
of stones and trees  
of stars and stillness and breeze...  
He also made me.  
With His word He called the world into existence  
as a storyteller describes a scene.  
And with His hands He crafted me, my spirit, mind, body and soul,  
that we may step into this story together  
and weave the most wonderful, beautiful, adventurous tale.  
That together we may live it full.  
Just as rays of sun now shine upon me,  
As waves wash through me,  
As breezes cleanse me...  
I am the ray, the wave, the breeze.  
Together we are ONE.*

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