

2022 Patanjali Class

5/3/22

16 – Yoga Letter Fifteen

Nitya finishes off his Yoga Letters in stunning fashion, inspiring and directing us to an enthusiastic immersion in the textbook we propose to dive into. He opens with a brief reference to *videhas* and *prakritilayas*, who he covers at length under Sutra I:15, beginning on page 68, if you want to know more about them. They essentially stand for degrees of radical yogic absorption, far beyond anything we aspire to, yet with reference to the same universal impediments. Nitya sums up his description of them on page 70:

These two examples can throw some light on the transcendence of desire and obligatory conformity. Freedom from desire and the transcendence of obligation remove all sense of fear from the mind.

Deb explained how Nataraja Guru considered dialectical methodology—the merging of opposites to yield higher understanding—essential to a practical philosophy, and Nitya will be examining Patanjali through this lens. Here, in Letter 15, Nitya is looking at how dialectics can impact our personal mythology, relieving our self-imposed pressure from psychological needs by helping us develop a truly neutral witnessing consciousness. Neutrality dissolves the need to fight for our position. Here we are being asked to address our personal myths and the pressures mounted by our memories, which are symptoms of having no control over our life. Deb was especially taken by this key paragraph:

What is expected of a yogi is to become the master of the situation under all circumstances. Between your myth and your physicality there is a neutral zone where your witnessing consciousness is seated. When the witnessing consciousness also assumes the responsibility to will, the volition becomes more and more freed from irrational forces. Instead of leaving the act of restraint to the whims of your neurotic fears, all intentions can be carried out in the floodlight of your fully operating awareness.

Bill noticed how Nitya has added that it's the witnessing consciousness that assumes a responsibility to will, freed from "irrational forces." Being able to have our actions come from a place of equanimity, where you can see things clearly without the usual neurotic whims, is liberating.

I'd add the opposite: that when our actions don't originate in equanimity, they are binding, and the more imbalanced, the more binding. Immediately preceding the above quote is this potent directive:

If you aspire to live the disciplined life of a yogi you should have a clear picture of the alternation of your personal consciousness back and forth between the compulsive behavior of an animal and the detached, repressive withdrawal of a conscientious person. Both of these aspects are symptoms of having no control over your life and remaining as a slave to the forces of circumstance.

Since the Yoga Letters were written, animals have come up in scientific estimation from mere brutes to highly intelligent, sentient beings, and we no longer use them as examples of brute behavior. Nitya was definitely referring to outwardly-directed impulses in humans, with the compensatory withdrawal as countervailing

inwardly-directed compulsions. Either of those “directions” undermines neutrality, negatively impacting our actions. For that matter, each is a reaction to the other, a counterbalance. The yogi combines both of those states in a neutral synthesis to upgrade their mythology toward neutrality.

Bill spoke about the fact that we have both cultural norms and ones we create for ourselves to hold back our urges, but they aren't really being witnessed from a clear place. Such consciousness is socially valued, but is still a construct of our personality, and not of that clear light.

With a discerning eye we can note that most people cling to one or the other of these polarities, to which we apply the shorthand *well-behaved* or *badly-behaved*. Giving in to one side and opposing the other doesn't result in yoga, or *unitive behavior*.

Jan was struck by the line: “It is not difficult to cultivate an awareness that is both critical and sympathetic.” She knows it's so easy to be critical of ourselves and others, but to bring in compassion and sympathy is a crucial part of attaining the transformation advocated here.

Remember that Beverley called them “splendid sentences,” and the first one she submitted (both of these are in Nitya's [Selected Quotes](#)) is “Carrying a bee in one's bonnet and admiring its buzz as the perennial hum of eternal truth can at best be nothing short of finding one's niche in a fool's paradise.” (My Personal Philosophy of Life). Thank you, Beverley!

Speaking of Nitya's Selected Quotes, the first page boasts: “We have to choose between the duality of appearance, and reality.” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, III.214) I inserted the comma after the fact, because it is of utmost importance. Without the comma, you would read it that appearance and reality are a duality, but then reality becomes one side of a duality. Yet it's appearance that's dual, while reality is unitive. And that's our true choice: duality *or* unity, appearance *or* reality.

I wondered why it is that we feel we have to lean so heavily on being either critical or sympathetic? Deb laughingly admitted we can be goodie-goodie or we can be critical, but to put the two together, based on awareness of whole situation, is challenging. I've found that many people imagine that if you are sympathetic it means you approve of something, so we make sure to trumpet our complaints, to prove this is not the case. That's like worrying a wound, rather than allowing it to heal.

Actually, reality doesn't require sympathy or criticism: they both dissolve in a unitive awareness. Though Nitya delivered both medicaments as needed, he also radiated the state of total acceptance and unlimited liability that goes utterly beyond those categories. The Other melts away; it's not even there. The resultant condition is eminently tangible.

Deb related this to "The compulsions of the myth and physicality of an ordinary person of undisciplined life are in a horizontal range." It reminded her of the epochal silent movie [The Passion of Joan of Arc](#), with the script taken from the literal record of the Inquisitors' questions and Joan's replies. They weren't really answers, because she transcended their entire abysmal context. Her prosecutors were accusing her with pragmatic suppositions, and she responded from a transcendent perspective. She never lowered herself to their level, she spoke from a more expanded place.

Charles has been getting reacquainted with *Steppenwolf*, by Herman Hesse, a book he read in the 60s when he was an "ignorant young lout." It seemed like Fun with Drugs, then. Now he's seeing the depth he missed back in the Stoner Age, and it's as if it's illustrating this particular Letter. This is the book where he speaks of the laughter of the Immortals (one of Deb's favorite sayings), hinting that there is a factor out there which can't be discussed rationally, only poetically, mythologically. The protagonist finally meets the immortals in the Magic Theater, and attains to a certain state of mind where he experiences the death of his ego. Among

others present are Mozart and Goethe, and they are laughing at him, trying to convince him to lighten up. Yet he is addicted to the bourgeois life—he can't escape from delusory middle-class life. His instinctive life is thwarted and choked because of his bourgeois conditionings, even if he theoretically sees through the illusion of those conventions.

Deb wondered where we are to find that neutral awareness in ourselves, and Charles answered, possibly through grace. It's not as though we can locate it with a flashlight. Deb added, as long as you're content with having your tea and crumpets, it's never going to happen.

Well, it could happen anyway, but not *because* of the tea and crumpets.

Susan kindly sent an edited version of what she told us next:

I have been realizing recently how much I tend to go outside of myself when interacting with others. I get together with someone and usually drop into what I imagine to be their point of view, their interests, their concerns. I am not as comfortable just staying in my own being, at least not at first. I am learning that this is a type of defense mechanism that started when I was very young. It was a way of feeling safe, a hypervigilance meant to rule out possible danger. I am very frustrated about this instinct of mine but I can now feel more compassion toward it. I am trying to be more aware of when I am in touch with my (witnessing) self. Sometimes, I can feel it strongly, as when I am listening to beautiful choral music and sinking into a warm bath. And, of course, once I feel into my self, I connect with others more authentically and feel connected to all.

This is in many respects a perfect illustration of the Letter, and we talked for some time about its various implications. We can either be drawn out of ourselves into the Other, or retreat into ourselves

and erect walls. Both are defense mechanisms. Self-confidence allows us to be present and open, fearless. The fear in many cases is a vestige, it's not generated by the person or situation in front of us, so we can't act optimally unless we have freed ourselves from it. This is the type of skill than can be diligently reinforced and developed, and I for one am going to try to use my bath time to better effect by replacing the old "relaxing my muscles" myth, with a "becoming fearless" one.

Deb felt Susan's technique illustrated asana, which in Patanjali means simply being grounded in your own heart, in your own self. Asana means sitting right in your truest self, not going out and not going in.

Jan felt the example related well with Nitya's "What were previously experienced as physical or biological urges now become transformed into a continuous flow of libidinal energy that is exposed to the light of corrective purification...." She could see this is what Susan was talking about: getting more into that place of identifying with the vein that makes most sense in your life, and when you are in that flow you can tap into the best parts of yourself, robustly.

We didn't talk much about myths, but they are important in the Letter, so I read out a bit from the old notes:

Our life is energized by myths. Nitya begins with a brief survey of some of the most impelling. Expanding on his idea: we modern humans have been trained to see ourselves as stuck, victims of fate, or genetics, or inadequate education, or whatever. Neurobiology attempts to prove that we are mere puppets manipulated by our memories and conditioned responses. Popular media sneers at every attempt to escape from the quicksand of consumerism and mediocrity. Myths such as these can keep us bound for a lifetime, running in place on a treadmill supplied by shopping malls. Our first task is to

dig beneath the surface to rediscover the myths that can energize us to become fully alive. These are all over the place, but are often tarnished by misinterpretations and misunderstandings. Like rusty suits of armor, they won't help us until we clean them up and oil the joints.

One of our preeminent myths in the Gurukula is "attaining the Absolute." It can become a dead cliché as easily as anything else, yet it's also a myth that can energize us along the lines of Nitya's: "It goes without saying that there should be great yearning and zeal on the part of the aspirant to achieve spiritual conversion." Here's how Nitya unifies the goal and the seeking, in another source:

The actualization, which is yet to come, is not a complete product but a continuing process of going from one finite stage to the next finite stage, infinitely, not quite reaching it, nor coming to a stage where you can say now it is perfect. When you think of an infinity which can never be reached but will always be attempted, and we move towards that direction, we have an idea of the Absolute. (Nitya Gita video XII.2)

Another common myth is there's such a thing as "enlightenment." It's one of the most binding myths, and also one of the most energizing. We need to be careful it doesn't lead to partial, static thinking that excludes divinity from the greater part of our life. I suspect for many of us, our myths about it are based on psychedelic experiences, which really are filled with dazzling light, and are at variance with our everyday perceptions. Those are very special experiences, yet enlightenment is available to us at all times, and that is definitely the thrust here. Sure, we need the enthusiasm, but it should not be reserved for "After Completion." As Taoists know, after completion is a time brimming with

misfortune. Let me add something from my Gita commentary, chapter XII:

The Gita is not trying to rule out having goals, only being dragged out of our normal state of happiness on their account. Goals motivate us, and unity with the Absolute is in a sense a goal, as we have noted in X, 18. The rule of thumb might be expressed as: it's okay to use goals to overcome inertia, but once you get going you can maintain an open attitude about what may happen next, and doing so invites the involvement of innumerable unknown potentials.

Deb reported that our daughter Harmony sent her a healing meditation that follows this line of thinking. You are already healed. The central understanding is that what you are experiencing as a problem is already cured, and you only need to come to that awareness. It's an interesting dichotomy: you both recognize that the situation is whole and perfect, and yet it goes without saying there should be a great yearning and zeal to achieve healing, or in the present context spiritual conversion. Those things we normally understand as polarities, both are existing, and we need to understand how perfect and inclusive the whole already is. The use of polarities blended together is a paradox that rationality won't tease apart.

Susan insisted we have to practice to get to joy sometimes, and I suppose it will take then entire Patanjali study to make the case that practicing can also be an impediment, because we inevitably downgrade the present in favor of the future. Deb felt it was more like putting yourself in the flow of a stream.

Bill concluded with a nod to that "great yearning and zeal," meaning the energy you bring to your practice, and how important it is in terms of your aspirations.

We all have goals, yet what we tend to leave out is the

simultaneous appreciation of the present. We don't have to forget the joys of the moment and the experience of now to grow. We're not trying to shrink our awareness down to a point, where we have no motivation, but to enhance our motivation, by not only making what we do enjoyable, but inviting our full being to participate in it. Being doesn't make long-term plans, it just is. I offered my lifelong piano "practice" as a perfect example. I'm working hard to always get better, but there's no absolute moment when I might "arrive." It's an infinite progression, always beautiful, always with errors, frustrations and missteps to work on, to challenge my complacency with. There's always a gap between what I want to communicate musically and what I am able to communicate, and I've learned to be okay with that, because the other fantasy is never going to happen in the way I imagine it. So I make something else out of it. I change my goals so that there is plenty of satisfaction in mediocrity.

This philosophy is teaching us to not leave life out of life.

I promised to include the poems from the earlier Notes that we used for our closing meditation:

Deb shared a poem from Li-young Lee that everyone wanted to see in the class notes:

The Hammock

When I lay my head in my mother's lap
I think how day hides the stars,
the way I lay hidden once, waiting
inside my mother's singing to herself. And I remember
how she carried me on her back
between home and the kindergarten
once each morning and once each afternoon.

I don't know what my mother's thinking.

When my son lays his head in my lap, I wonder:
Do his father's kisses keep his father's worries
from becoming his? I think, Dear God, and remember
there are stars we haven't heard from yet:
They have so far to arrive. Amen,
I think, and I feel almost comforted.

I've no idea what my child is thinking.

Between two unknowns, I live my life.
Between my mother's hopes, older than I am
by coming before me, and my child's wishes, older than I am
by outliving me. And what's it like?
Is it a door, and a good-bye on either side?
A window, and eternity on either side?
Yes, and a little singing between two great rests.

We dive deep in our little class sessions, so that we don't just waste our time quietly mumbling between the two great Unknowns that bracket all our lives. We don't sit like we're waiting for an afterlife before we can begin to be alive. We don't sit like a battered child, waiting for the next blow. We don't spew garbage, imagining it will raise us above our fellow beings. A little singing, a sharing of beauty, a love that invisibly reaches out to surrender to our dear ones who so briefly hold us in their arms or come to sit awhile in our laps.

Scotty shared an African proverb that touched everyone's heart, and is a fitting conclusion to our class:

Let your love be like the misty rain.

Falling softly,

Yet flooding the river.

Aum.

Part II

From the first Yoga Shastra study group, with Nancy:

11/30/10

Wow, Letter 15 packs a punch. Brilliant and important. When Nitya speaks of prakritilayas as “Those who identify their stream of life as an integral part of the eternal flux of elements,” they become much more accessible, no longer seeming so otherworldly. I suppose I relate to this more as an intellectual abstraction, but I often ponder how we are so placed in a natural continuum that our life takes its course almost like floating down a river. We may swim a few strokes and splash around a bit, but the general drift—the “eternal flux of elements”—remains very little affected. A prakritilaya, then, is someone who is content to go with the flow and not try to swim away to an imaginary safe harbor.

I also love that the guru treats “the compulsive behavior of an animal” as the flip side of “the detached, repressive withdrawal of a conscientious person.” The conclusion to be drawn? “Both of these aspects are symptoms of having no control over your life and remaining as a slave to the forces of circumstance.” This is the kind of radical perspective that so attracts me to this particular guru. The majority are pleased to condemn compulsive behavior, but then wax rhapsodic over all sorts of prescribed repressions.

Personally, I find repressiveness to be even more deleterious than normal compulsion, and lament the toll of human suffering wrought by those who revel in crushing every feeble attempt at independence on the part of inhibited people, or at least who praise dull quiescence as evidence of spirituality. Nitya hits the nail on the head with seeing these as complementary afflictions....

In the remainder of the Letter Nitya presents a rare insider peek at the way a relation with a preceptor can break us free from such a bind. This is an intellectually satisfying depiction of spiritual development, which is not often spelled out in non-worshipful terms. That's the way I like it! The key is in having an actual person to relate to, rather than a set of ideas or ideals, because another person will be much less colored by our desires. It's awfully easy for us to bend our perceptions to match our goals, even when our actions testify otherwise....

I was recently in a situation with a long history, where two people work as a team to psychologically beat me up. My initial reaction is intense pain, which I know makes it very hard to "be a master of the situation." Pain forces me to react negatively and withdraw as much as possible. This time I was able to see it coming and hold my ground. The pain was there, but I refused to let it dominate me. It gave me more living space, though in this case not between a desire and its resultant action, but between a painful stimulus and its resulting, all too predictable response. I had to stay with the upset for several hours, but it became easier and easier. I'm pretty sure the other people, who were mainly unconsciously motivated, were also able to let go of their bullying when it was apparent it wasn't going to work. So the eventual outcome was neutral to positive, where this situation had previously resulted in disastrous problems. I'm sorry I can't be more specific, but I think the principle here is the point. Nitya calls us to "cultivate an awareness that is both critical and sympathetic,"

and then we can pull ourselves together when circumstances pull us apart.

One more example before this goes to press. Nitya describes the horizontal pole, which we normally picture as objective/subjective or waking/dream, as connecting myth and physicality. We could call these fantasy and actuality. The recent revelations of Wikileaks about the sordid reality of “diplomacy” highlight an important way this plays out in “real life.” There is a violent and corrupt manner in which virtually all governments operate, but it is kept out of the public eye quite effectively, and anyone pointing it out is treated as a traitor to the cause. Instead of striving for honesty, governments produce a cover story tailored to the beliefs of their citizens, in order to mollify them and divert their attention away from the criminal behavior. It works very well, for the most part.

Citizens’ discussions of the issues then degenerate into how much to accept or reject of the cover story, and they are made utterly impotent, because the cover story is a myth to begin with. But most people are content to docilely accept what they are told, and hope for the best. It is definitely much safer that way.

Wikileaks has performed a bit of yogic contemplation on the general consensus, revealing its falsity for all to see. Many people will simply ignore what’s going on, and most of the rest will argue that it is necessary, and so the veil should be put back in place as quickly as possible. Only the real yogis will uphold truth and justice, those values that verticalize the horizontal pragmatic disasters regularly mounted in the self-interest of various power elites. Yogis know that ignorance breeds bad things, up to and including mass murder and war. In refusing to comply, they withdraw from the physical/myth orientation of prakriti to seek the true freedom of the purusha. They rest assured that buying into a myth holds very limited benefits at best, and so they don’t.

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From the first round of Class Notes:

9/16/8

Letter Fifteen

The Yoga letters class swept to a close on a perfect evening, warm, and radiant with the orange glow of a sannyasin moon. We are all well-prepared and eager to plunge ahead with the full Patanjali study in the not too distant future.

In *The Tin Drum*, Gunther Grass famously describes the twentieth century as “barbaric, mystical, bored.” The Gurukula studies are aimed at converting this dominant paradigm to “compassionate, transcendental, turned on.” By moving to the central core of the horizontal, that which we call the vertical, such a transformation becomes possible.

Our life is energized by myths. Nitya begins with a brief survey of some of the most impelling. Expanding on his idea: we modern humans have been trained to see ourselves as stuck, victims of fate, or genetics, or inadequate education, or whatever. Neurobiology attempts to prove that we are mere puppets manipulated by our memories and conditioned responses. Popular media sneers at every attempt to escape from the quicksand of consumerism and mediocrity. Myths such as these can keep us bound for a lifetime, running in place on a treadmill supplied by shopping malls. Our first task is to dig beneath the surface to rediscover the myths that can energize us to become fully alive. These are all over the place, but are often tarnished by misinterpretations and misunderstandings. Like rusty suits of armor, they won't help us until we clean them up and oil the joints.

We have many myths about gods and spirits, but what they symbolize is mostly forgotten. Therefore they don't help us, they have become rote formulas or at best quaint anachronisms. In their place we have adopted other less obvious myths, without being fully aware of their impact on us. Somehow, we have to learn what our own myths are, before we can see whether they raise us up or smash us down.

[Quotes from Sutra I:15 about videhis and prakritilayas]

Amusingly, Nitya likens materialists to this latter group. Self-styled materialists of the modern era, as already mentioned, tend to be motivated by all sorts of unacknowledged myths and a priori beliefs, and are highly influenced by what others think about their behavior. That's not really materialism at all. Neuroticism might be a better name for it.

Regardless, the essential point for us is that we are motivated in all aspects of our life by myths and legends, as well as by physical urges and needs. It is crucial for a yogi to examine both their bodily life and the mythical pursuits they are prone to. Nitya gets to the nub of this right in the middle of the commentary:

If you aspire to live the disciplined life of a yogi you should have a clear picture of the alternation of your personal consciousness back and forth between the compulsive behavior of an animal and the detached, repressive withdrawal of a conscientious person. Both of these aspects are symptoms of having no control over your life and remaining as a slave to the forces of circumstance.

What is expected of a yogi is to become the master of the situation under all circumstances.

Most of us get educated only as far as repressing our natural guilelessness, and take refuge in the pinched state of the constipated, “civilized” human being, peaceful outside but raging within. As so beautifully taught in the Bhagavad Gita, yoga means moving beyond both extremes to effect a synthesis that transcends them both and liberates our spirit to walk freely on the earth. This is accomplished by moving to the witnessing state of the vertical and establishing a bipolarity with the Absolute in that windless place.

Witnessing is dynamic, and not necessarily passive. The yogi places their orientation at the negative pole of the vertical axis, called the alpha, and imagines (in the best sense of the word) the teacher, the guru, or the motivating myth at the omega....

To “fully appreciate the teaching of a master” is just a gentle way of saying “get the point” or “become enlightened.” It does not mean in any way that you become an admirer of the teacher per se. As Nitya acknowledges, there may well be sentiments (transference and countertransference) between teacher and student, but these are sublimated by an intelligent orientation to the eternal aspect that is merely symbolized by its temporary embodiment. It's a sweet thing, when kept in proper bounds. Nothing to be ashamed of....

In conclusion, spiritual transformation and growth occurs when there is a vertical relation between you and what you seek, which at its best is represented by an enlightened master who can personally instruct you. Sadly, even these sages are often treated as myths instead of being embraced as real factors in our life: we keep their effects at a remove by worshipping them instead of learning what they reveal about ourselves. But examining yourself with an attitude that is simultaneously critical and sympathetic, you break the grip of both instinctual behavior and horizontal

allurements. You realize that nothing on the horizontal plane, all of which is doomed to pass away and in any case has dissatisfaction as one of its foundational building blocks, can be crafted to suit you for very long. Your heightened awareness of how you are caught allows you to clear a psychic space where you can begin to know the peace that surpasseth horizontal conceptualization. In this first phase of detachment, you can consciously select healthy alternatives and implement them.

Nitya concludes his nonpareil survey of traditional yoga with the exciting possibilities of what can happen when you set out to become the master of every situation in your life:

What were previously experienced as physical or biological urges now become transformed into a continuous flow of libidinal energy that is exposed to the light of corrective purification that comes from your master's teaching. When this happens the quality of life changes. You have within yourself the feeling of having found your true way. This wholesome transformation is very often recognized as a spiritual conversion. This is the second and superior phase of the highest kind of detachment. It goes without saying that there should be great yearning and zeal on the part of the aspirant to achieve spiritual conversion.

Isn't it paradoxical that enthusiasm and zeal have to be unearthed from their graves: that they aren't already exciting us at every moment? Yet until they kick in, yoga is just another boring, mystical and possibly barbaric activity to be grudgingly followed. Only when it begins to transform your life does it get exciting, and even then the ego may still reject it as a threat. So there is effort and vigilance to be exercised for a long time. Attraction to a teacher can be a positive factor at this stage.

There was a lot of sharing in the class of ways that our studies have indeed had an impact and improved our lives. Anita

had another couple of revelations over the weekend, where she found herself as a neutral witness instead of being embroiled in certain subject/object and pain/humiliation situations. She was surprised to find herself there, because it seems so natural, and yet is in fact a very big stride ahead on the path. Over time that surprise will be replaced with familiarity, the kind that breeds contentment rather than contempt.

Susan realized that her darling daughter, who is now in high school, was bombarded with so much input all day long that it was only reasonable for her to rush to her room and slam the door when she finally got home. Susan disciplined herself to allow her more space, and the result was that they went for a walk together over the weekend and Sarah shared all kinds of thoughts with her. There is a myth that we have to put pressure on kids all the time or they will misbehave or who knows what. Susan consciously relinquished that toxic myth and replaced it with one that gave this other human being the respect she deserves. The result was improved communication and good feelings for both.

Scotty talked about the inspiration he drew from the ascended masters (not sure what he meant by this), that filled him with loving thoughts and guidance. All such people, whether they once existed or not, are as myths to us now. We only know of them through stories, but their examples give us so much instruction and delight. We aren't alone in our quest, and don't have to invent everything from scratch. Scotty also told us about a class he took, from which he derived a mythical saying that "It feels safe to not know." We are made neurotic by the myth that everyone but us knows what's going on. Once we realize that we are all in the same boat, we can relax and enjoy. We may still want very much to know, but we aren't driven by neurotic impulses any longer. Curiously, this mantra accords with something that Susan's daughter's science teacher suggested for her last year, when she

was unhappy in school: “If she can just sit with the discomfort of not getting it, it will sink in.”

Part III

From new friend Dale:

I read the notes pretty carefully and reread a few paragraphs and lines to see that I understood better what was being discussed.

Thanks for giving me another peek into the work you guys are doing. It is very good and so many good conversations are being discussed and realizations beings realized in the process.

I made a few notes and what struck me first and foremost was GRACE. Grace is perennial and I've come to understand its importance in my limited understanding. I guess you could say I feel it and at the same time see concrete evidence of Grace, how it weaves into everything.

Veiling and Grace figure into God, world and soul (jivas), I think I have that triad correct, and Devine Grace helps us subdue the ego. [Later, Dale corrected this slightly to “it is the five fold functions of creation, sustenance, dissolution, veiling and Grace that is the correct teaching.”] taken from Sri Ramana’s teaching in Guru Vachaka Kovai.

Then I read something in the notes about holding on to (and I can't remember what specifically) but it was letting go of something once it had done its thing. It reminded me of the Buddha's teachings warning people that once you used your arms and legs to build a boat and then get into the boat and paddle hard across the ocean of samsara and reaching the further shore...you than leave the boat moored on that new shore rather than carrying the boat on your back while walking on dry land.

And the last impression I took away, although there were many in the notes,

"accomplished by moving to the witnessing state of the vertical and establishing a bipolarity with the Absolute in that windless place"...I love the idea, the poetry, and that bipolarity can be a positive experience and unitive!

Thanks Scott for sharing this with me.

AUM