

12/18/12  
Verse 4

Knowledge, the object of interest,  
and one's personal knowledge are nothing other than *mahas*;  
merging into that infinite, Supreme Knowledge,  
become That alone.

Knowledge, the object of knowledge, and one's cognition of both are in fact only variations of a beginningless Being. By merging in that knowledge of infinitude one should become undifferentiated with it.

Nataraja Guru's version:

Knowledge, its meaning known, and the personal knowledge  
Subjective, together make but one primal glory;  
Within the unrarified radiance of the great knowledge  
One should merge and become that alone.

At last in the fourth verse we have our first encounter with That Alone in the text. Bobby asked about what it means. All through the seven years of editing, I had a burning question in the back of my mind: what will we use for a title? A Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction just isn't catchy enough. I considered and discarded quite a number of possibilities as not measuring up. At last That Alone impressed itself on me. It was perfect. Alone is a contraction of 'all one' and is a powerful word in its own right. Nataraja Guru was very fond of Plotinus' description of the spiritual journey as "the flight of the alone to the Alone." The Alone or All One is the Absolute. 'That' (*tat* in Sanskrit) also designates the Absolute. That Alone can be stressed with either term being the noun and the other the adjective, eliciting nuances of meaning, or the pair can be a compound noun (like ice cream), making it into a synthesis. So in a way the title encodes the secret of yoga, of combining two into one. The result indicates the Absolute, which is the golden thread running through the entire masterwork, the more or less

visible touchstone in every verse. Bobby admitted that when he first met the book, *That Alone* didn't mean anything to him. I liked the mysterious aspect of two simple words that made an incomprehensible concept when joined, but thought that a slight concession should be made. The addition of *The Core of Wisdom* indicates that the Karu or core, the singularity at the origin of consciousness and the universe, was the focal point of the study. It makes enough sense, but also implies the query, "Just what IS the core of wisdom, anyway?" So there you have it: a simple title with plenty of depth.

For the class we used the original version of Verse 4, as the book version is rather long and dense. It's a fun verse to note how the flowing, somewhat simplified talk was later built up into a formidable teaching for the book. It's nice to have both.

The theme is breaking down boundaries and permitting our natural abilities to be expressed. We will work hard on this later in the study. For now, we have to first acknowledge that our "wave of consciousness" has become bound, weighted down by some serious excess baggage. Susan set the tone by talking about how she had been thinking about holiday celebrations, how rigid and formalized they were. People like to do the same things over and over. It's a relief to have a prescribed ritual to perform, so we don't have to think about it much. The easy way is to just go along with the guidelines that are laid at our feet. But Susan suspects there is more to life than that. Both ritual and freedom are fine; it's the free part that tends to drain away without our even realizing it. Then we become defenders of a status quo that is both dead and deadening.

Deb noted that it is made explicit here that we are supposed to refer back to our core of unity, even as the world expands into its usual multiplicity. Here we are acknowledging the triple (tri-basic) division of knower, known and knowledge that crops up often in our study. It's a very practical and useful scheme. The only problem is once we forget the core of unity, our knowledge is no longer grounded in truth. Our thinking then skitters all over the map, losing coherence and becoming detached from core values like compassion, peace and kindness. Once it is unmoored, knowledge can become the servant of greed, hatred and

violence. Many of the influences of a commercial consumer culture serve to detach us from our core so we can be easily duped and manipulated. The antidote is to continually reconnect with That Alone, the Core of Wisdom. As Nitya described in the last reading, we go out and rush around in the world, but then we come back and touch base, out and back, out and back. In that way we don't get lost. In this fourth verse, Nitya encourages us to go from all our small loves to the big love in a similar give and take:

In yesterday's verse we pictured our divine source as an oceanic treasury of values. If you love your son, or your friend, then there is a treasure in your heart. That becomes a light glowing all the time in the core of your being. But the love for your son or your friend, or for money for that matter, is what the Tamils call the little love. They contrast it to the big love or the big joy. The many specific things that come into our life give us the little, little joys, not that limitless joy, the joy of abundance, the abundant showering of eternal joy. Whether it is the small love or the big love, when it comes the heart goes to it. We are used to going from one small love to another small love. When a person is having *paramanipremam*, they are having absolute love, unbounded, infinite, without limit or frontiers. That love is experienced continuously. It is called devotion, bhakti.

We have been traveling outward from the core, tracing the trajectory of life as an expanding wave of consciousness. Now that unity has been divided into three aspects, we have arrived at what we take for granted as "ordinary" awareness. It's actually quite extraordinary, a miraculous construct that took billions of years to evolve. But we are built in such a way that we take the present miracles for granted, and only get excited by miracles that aren't present, and probably never will be. In the next couple of verses, Narayana Guru brings us to the everyday world where the extraordinary has become ordinary, where we will begin our ascent back to who we already are.

The practical importance of a search for truth is repeatedly underscored by the gurus. Once we divide the world into an internal knower knowing items of external knowledge, we cordon off our personal knowledge from the unknown, and pit ourselves against it. The unknown is a threat that is to be kept at bay. This is not an idle speculation. When contact with our true nature is blocked, we have a vast capacity for cruelty. Pick up a newspaper, if you dare, and read the litany of disasters promulgated by those whose hearts are broken. Then look into your own heart with renewed dedication. Nitya puts this beautifully:

When all these frontiers are gone, you come to possess the frontierless love. Each day you should be able to break one frontier, one separation. Tagore prays, “Where the head is held high and the world is not broken into fragments of narrow domestic walls, lead me into that world.” That’s the world we look for. Some people say a good wall makes a good neighbor, but Robert Frost laughs at it. He says neither walling in nor walling out works.

That supreme Light that shines without any frontiers, like the sun that shines above, caresses the sinner and the saint alike. It falls on the beautiful and the ugly in equal measure. In our meditation... we should look for the frontiers in our mind, for all the narrow domestic walls in it. We should break them down and even go beyond that. Walls are built out of fear. The more you are afraid the more vulnerable you become, and then you want to become invulnerable. So you make fortresses and mount machine guns on the walls, and inside you are busy building atomic bombs. We have to disarm ourselves. We have to disarm others also.

Each of us is a propagating wave of the Absolute as a monad of consciousness. Born into the world, it expands outward at a rapidly increasing velocity. It begins to interact and be distorted by all the other waves in the electromagnetic ocean. In order to maintain its integrity it has to construct boundaries and reinforce them. But the boundaries are

invisible and intangible. They are mental bounds, and they alter our trajectory without our realizing it. Once we become strong enough as aware adults, we can begin the process of dismantling our customized straitjacket. We can be affected by everything without losing our integrity.

Bobby pointed out that some of our boundaries are important, like not touching a hot stove, and that's right. We aren't trying to defy the laws of nature. Michael and Deb gave the example of fire walkers, proving the abilities of mind over matter. There are always those who want to impress people by mutilating themselves. None of that is relevant to spiritual life. They are just new ways of avoiding the important issue of restoration of our souls to us. There are a million diversions causing us to ignore our core. Psychologist Alice Miller astutely chronicles how children learn to build walls around their own authenticity and entomb it possibly forever. The walls easily deflect our sporadic attempts to regain entry. This explains why we eagerly pursue fantasies instead of confronting our own defenses and demolishing them. Atmo study will help us do exactly the opposite, if we can hang in there with it.

With that in mind, we briefly reviewed Nitya's four qualifications for our present study.

First, we must distinguish truth from falsehood, and the valuable from the trivial.

Second, we must stay focused and not get distracted.

Third, we should remember there's no point in having expectations. They are simply another distraction.

Fourth, we resolve to be freed of our prejudices and conditionings. That means we have to realize and admit we have them. Because we ourselves have constructed them, we take them for granted. They are just what we want, just what we think, just what we believe. We have to be prepared to give up that conceit. This study should convince us that our habitual modes of thinking constitute our bondage.

Michael wanted some clarification on the word *connation*. Nitya speaks of the triple set of cognition, connation and affection. Connation is a rare word, here meant to include the associations our memories

make with what is perceived. We cognize—observe—something; next we identify it, or it connotes some imagery; and then we decide whether we like it, hate it, or are indifferent. The three are so compressed and fluid they appear as one.

From what I can gather, Nataraja Guru tried to select English language equivalents for Sanskrit terms, as part of his attempt to make Vedantic wisdom available to scientists. I have the feeling that cognition, connotation and affection were meant to substitute for sat, chit and ananda, respectively. Since Nataraja Guru failed to penetrate the well-defended fortresses of twentieth century science, the Gurukula is the only place you will encounter these terms used in this way.

Speaking of terminology, Bobby felt that the cliché of breaking down boundaries was too violent, so he replaced it with evaporating boundaries. That's very nice. Evaporation takes heat, tapas, so it requires effort also, but is a more pacifist—and more thoroughgoing—version than breaking. Plus, when walls evaporate they dissipate into thin air, but when broken they leave piles of rubble all around. So it struck everyone that this was a nice upgrade to our attitude. Let us evanesce our walls through kindly wisdom applied as warmth, so that the ice melts and the residue evaporates. Sounds just right. Gentleness does not have to undermine our intensity.

We closed with a magnificent poem that has taken on new depths of meaning thanks to our recent explorations, not to mention the ongoing series of tragedies we have heard about that are exactly like floodwaters of damaged childhoods unleashing their venom through broken dikes. The only true cure is the wisdom of That Alone. Stafford urges us to share with and care for each other as honestly as we are able.

Class resumes in three weeks. We wish you all a very happy holiday season, filled with traditions and lots of serendipity and innovation!

A RITUAL TO READ TO EACH OTHER  
by William Stafford

If you don't know the kind of person I am

and I don't know the kind of person you are  
a pattern that others made may prevail in the world  
and following the wrong god home we may miss our star.

For there is many a small betrayal in the mind,  
a shrug that lets the fragile sequence break  
sending with shouts the horrible errors of childhood  
storming out to play through the broken dike.

And as elephants parade holding each elephant's tail,  
but if one wanders the circus won't find the park,  
I call it cruel and maybe the root of all cruelty  
to know what occurs but not recognize the fact.

And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy,  
a remote important region in all who talk:  
though we could fool each other, we should consider--  
lest the parade of our mutual life get lost in the dark.

For it is important that awake people be awake,  
or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep;  
the signals we give--yes or no, or maybe--  
should be clear: the darkness around us is deep.

## Part II

Nataraja Guru's take on this verse is incisive, and I have reproduced nearly all of it:

Verse 4:

There is a subtle tri-basic factor called *triputi* which is responsible for our wrong appraisal of reality. The lazy mind left to itself without the attitude of contemplation, has a tendency to view

reality sectionally or horizontally, as it were, from an angle which takes for granted the knower, the knowledge as a concept, and the objective side of knowledge as three distinct separate entities. One has to counteract this tri-basic prejudice to which the human mind is naturally disposed. We take a cross sectional rather than a lengthwise view of reality.

Bergson has referred to this tendency as “the cinematographic function of thought” by which it appraises “stills” of a moving picture rather than the motion as such. Pure motion eludes appraisal by the mind because of its incapacity by its very structure to take in events other than mechanistically. The horizontalization of our relation with the visible world produces a similar tri-partite cleavage in our thought-process, which, instead of being the continuous process that it really is, shows itself under split or separated aspects by which the unitive nature of thought is marred.

The paradoxes of Zeno are well-known classical examples of the kind of contradiction or error implied in all thought referring to the phenomenal world related to space. Even with reference to the vertical time axis, pure time can be thought of without such divisions into disjunct events, by a little training in meditation; but it is merely the time as known by the tickings of the clock that is more naturally cognized.

When the vertical view is established, a sense of wonder of contemplative vision goes with it. As such knowledge refers to the Absolute, it is called here the “great knowledge” which, once established, shines inclusively without intermission.

**But one primeval glory:** When the tri-partite split has been transcended by another way of approach to reality which is more in keeping with contemplation, an inclusive and universal value of great interest and intellectual content takes its place in the center of consciousness.

The elements when conceived as belonging to the grand elements of the vertically graded series that we have seen implied



in the last verse, are here referred to as making one *mahas* (great knowledge). The Guru does not want straightaway at this initial stage of the development of the subject, to refer to any definite finalized concept such as the *atman* or the Absolute. The notion of the Absolute Self will be developed methodically stage by stage. But even here, the relation thus correctly established between the subject and the object of contemplation does not admit of any duality at all, and the bipolarity or complementarity is bound to be perfect. The unitive character of the relationship is underlined by the words “but” and “one” which, read together with the last word of the verse where the word “alone” occurs, contains something of the same idea as that of Plotinus where he refers to contemplation as “the flight of the alone to the Alone.”

**Unrarified radiance:** Light is the favorite analogy for wisdom. Direct awareness, which true wisdom demands, is not of the nature of a merely syllogistic ratiocination, but approximates to an intuitive vision which is immediate rather than mediate. Ratiocinative thought is normal as between things, and is a dull mechanistic movement in consciousness compared to the compact or intensive thought which contemplation can establish.... When such a white heat is established in thought, the methodology applicable becomes changed.... Light, when it becomes intense, denies darkness and establishes itself as reality without a rival. Relativistic thought thus changes into absolutist thought which becomes unitive and positive.

**Become that alone:** The identity of subject and object in contemplative life has been recognized both in the East and the West. The reference of Plotinus to the flight of the alone to the Alone is a direct paraphrase of the state of *kaivalya* (aloneness) which is the goal of contemplative life even according to the dualistic schools such as that of Patanjali. With the *maha-vakyas* (great dicta) derived from the Upanishads, such as *tat tvam asi*

(That thou art), this identity of subject and object may be said to be the central doctrine of wisdom generally.

When we say that the kingdom of God is within, or that I and my Father are one, as in the Biblical context, the same verity is implicit. The imitation of Christ would be sacrilege if there was not this idea implicit in the suggestion made. That the *brahman*-knower attains *brahman* and becomes one with it, is clearly stated in the Taittiriya Upanishad (II, i): “He who knows *brahman* attains to the highest.” That the present work follows the lines of Vedanta in general is indicated here. (27-29)

### Part III

This came from Wendy. NTNT is *Neither This nor That But Aum*, the “short version” of the Atmo study:

‘Become That alone.’ ..... letting go of our mistaken sense of who we are ....but the ego does not let go that easily and my mind is constantly busy....yet, merging into that infinite Reality of Supreme Knowledge sounds so much like going home. I have made many efforts to become aware of all that gets in the way and ‘keeps me trapped in the dark caves of a few personal and private interests.’ {NTNTp6]

It is a mixture of identity, conditioning and feelings, with vasanas and samskaras which hold me into known patterns of living, and the strategies my ego uses to keep the status quo in everyday life. As Tagore says:

*‘Where the head is held high and the world is not broken into fragments of narrow domestic walls, lead me into that world.’* The world of big love, inclusive and expanding. The universality of the Self.

Then: ‘the supreme light shines on everyone, everything.’ Lovely reassuring words to inspire me to turn away from the shadows.

It is a fine line, as I get older, to let go in the outer world of the unnecessary domination of media, technology and our surface society which all offer fast food for my personality/senses/ ego. There is so much to appreciate and be thankful for which makes daily living easier, the media also gives worldwide news and views, technology enables me to send this email and be connected to our group. There are many wonders to be truly enjoyed. But like the garden, life needs constant weeding for the beautiful blooms to shine forth!

Similarly my inner world is much the same. Lots of good values and ideals mixed in with many personal likes and dislikes. Same principles of weeding and wonder!

I am re-reading a favourite book by Eknarth Easwaran called 'Take Your Time.' It is a small paperback and full of pruning ideas which fit our studies. It is about mindfulness, finding balance, living in freedom, attuning to a higher image, and finding the still centre. In the chapter on living in freedom he discusses the value of not being bound to preferences. As EE says: 'if left alone, the preferences of the senses get tighter and tighter until nothing is comfortable; nothing will please. Nothing will be quite right.' He goes on later: 'When the senses are trained they are alert and sensitive. There is a sense of freshness and newness about everything. Instead of feeling you are in the same old groove, you find choices to be made all the time.' When these choices are good, wholesome and beautiful they lead us towards loftier aspirations as they are inclusive rather than exclusive, and we naturally move away from our narrow ego centred lives.

I recalled an incident last week when Karel and I decided to visit the zoo for a coffee and see the young Red Pandas. It was the first fine day for ages and also the last week of school holidays. When we arrived there were hundreds of people queuing to get in. We found a disabled parking space and made our way in, as we are members. But once inside it was bedlam. My personal preferences

and conditioning swiftly kicked in! This was not how we usually enjoyed the zoo and I wanted to leave. Karel just battled on through the tropical house and I reluctantly followed. At the café, as our usual place was full, he quietly settled at a picnic table on the grass below. I went inside and bought out our coffees and cakes to share. As we sat enjoying them, watching the many families passing and the happy eager faces of the children, I recognised how I had succumbed to my narrow expectations and that now I was seeing the bigger picture and at once began to feel a part of this whole zoo experience. Karel disarmed me as he smiled and said what fun it all was. We walked up and saw the red Pandas up in the trees, who lived in a quieter area of the zoo, so we enjoyed a peaceful stroll in the sun, before returning to join the happy crowd watching the monkeys. A nice mixture of alone and together.

This incident made me look at many areas of my life which need some widening! It is easy to get locked into habits and routines, and some are helpful, like regular meals and kindness, meditation, being on time and listening to others. Enjoying making things beautiful. Being responsive to Karel's needs. Looking after the garden and the old house and being sensitive to life. As I dislike noise, crowds and chaos, [all factors in the zoo incident] I could see how they got in the way of acceptance of what is, now. Also life is so much to do with balance. I have to balance the noise of the traffic on the road below our house with the beauty of the garden above; the soft Bamboo chimes and rustling Bamboos. Living in the flow. I continue to observe all this, persevere and make changes.

John H. wrote:

I have a question. If we clear walls, or patterns perception, or ruts of thinking, is it safe for us to trust our senses, too, or do they become tainted, as it were, by their history, or residue of old

thoughts? If so, can we clear these as well? I sometimes think that my use of LSD back in the day sort of helped there, but I was careful to back away from its use for fear that it, too, could become some kind of escape mechanism vs. a learning tool.

My response:

It's much safer to trust our senses than to not trust them! We have to have that cosmic external world we are in partnership with to anchor us. Still, we know perfectly well that the selective and faulty input of the senses is then managed by the brain to produce an edited result for our viewing pleasure. It's a marvelous production, staged for our benefit. We can trust it to a degree, but we shouldn't be duped by it. Very often we are, I'm afraid.

If we cancel out our prejudices and unnecessary wants, it improves the resulting stage show immeasurably, but as you say it is almost inevitably tainted (we often say colored) by our history. As we have often noted, psychology strives to remove the coloration by confrontation, by unearthing the traumatic memories from the deep past. As Alice Miller is well aware, this produces fear along with the excitement of breaking free, so there is every temptation to quit the game. And the greater the trauma, the greater the fear, so the greater the incentive to let sleeping dogs lie. By contrast, Vedanta holds that by rediscovering our true nature, the colorations *evaporate*, to use Bobby's term. The Gurukula follows a middle path where we work on our hang-ups as we simultaneously seek our true nature. Our postulated true nature is guarded and padded over by our memories, so whatever ones we can consciously nullify makes the journey easier. Otherwise, they effortlessly turn us away from authentic being to an *image* of being, as in the golden disk blocking truth of the Isa Upanishad.

I agree, LSD is the fast lane of evaporative insight, and your caution was also wise. It is a truism that psychedelics give a vision of our "native place" but don't actually get us there. They merely point the way, but that's an extremely valuable aid for beings with no clue, rolling stones with no direction home, as Saint Bob Dylan

put it once upon a time. Because it is so compelling and transformative, many have mistaken the vision for reality, climbed onto the cloud and sailed off into the sunset. Vedanta is for those who want to keep their feet on the ground. For me, I find the pie-in-the-sky crowd embarrassing, vainly struggling as they are to make their fantasies appear real. Describing LSD as potentially an escape mechanism is quite accurate. I believe one of the ego's most elegant tricks is to keep itself blindfolded by painting the inside of the blindfold with beautiful projections. The alternative, the "learning tool" aspect, would help us to remove the blindfold instead. It's a less sensational route, but far more satisfying in the long run.

#### Part IV

First off, here is a Vedantic flavored poem from Brenda:

#### **Love After Love**

The time will come  
when, with elation  
you will greet yourself arriving  
at your own door, in your own mirror  
and each will smile at the other's welcome,

and say, sit here. Eat.

You will love again the stranger who was your self.  
Give wine. Give bread. Give back your heart  
to itself, to the stranger who has loved you

all your life, whom you ignored  
for another, who knows you by heart.  
Take down the love letters from the bookshelf,

the photographs, the desperate notes,  
peel your own image from the mirror.

Sit. Feast on your life.

Derek Walcott

\* \* \*

Sujit will be including insights into the poetic language of the Malayalam original along with his general observations, which adds a very nice dimension to our study. There are many subtleties in this masterwork that cannot be translated, but non-native speakers can appreciate them when they are pointed out to us. Sujit writes:

Verse 4 on its own is a remarkable Malayalam literary composition, as the words are so punctiliously chosen and arranged to configure melodious rhyme and sensibility. The most impressive verse so far.

My personal appreciation train goes as follows. The poet (Narayana Guru) could have started off the verse with a single word such as '*triputi*', but instead he tightly packed and arranged the verse with words representing all three forms of knowledge - *arivum*, *arinnitum arthavum*, *pumantann arivum*. Most impressive is the apt use of the word '*arthavum*', which normally translates as 'meaning', 'sense', 'matter', 'object' etc. Nitya points mainly to two meanings for '*artham*' - 'value' and 'meaning'; preferring to apply the usage here as representative of 'value'. As the usage here represents the object (of knowledge), and an object in reality could be either tangible or intangible - such as a song. In Malayalam/Sanskrit there is yet another word that incorporates the word '*artham*'; that word is '*padhartham*', which means 'substance'. However substance would imply something tangible only. So the poet has used just the '*artham*' part out of '*padhartham*'. '*Artham*' flexibly applies for any 'object of knowledge' both tangible and intangible. Very smart usage!

Nitya's notes provide a good insight into the first part of the Verse 4. The concept of the knower at times being aware of, or conscious of, the three facets of knowledge; and at other times, when engrossed in a subject of interest or in devotion, being universal and unaware of the three, and merging as one with knowledge. This was an interesting realization and insight provided by Nitya. It was an opportunity to revisit such personal situations from the past and refer back to occasions/instances when we are aware of the three, maybe in boredom, whereas engrossed and one with all three forms when captivated.

The start of the second part of the verse – ‘*viralata vittu vilangum*’ was not particularly explained in Nitya’s notes. I dwelled on this part, to make sense of it. In Malayalam the first three words literally mean as follows:

*viralata* = non-contiguousness; discontinuousness; rareness; scarcity etc.

*vittu* = depart; left; overcame.

*vilangum* = shine brilliantly; come into prominence

Read together, the words above would imply – entering a state of brilliance after departing from a state of non-contiguousness. In a sense by the use of the word 'infinite' Nitya covers for the phrase ‘*viralata vittu vilangum*’ - by turning the intermittent, scarce or discontinuous (flow of knowledge) into its antonym - which would be continuous, unlimited or infinite.

In summary, looking back at the two parts of the Verse 4, I am prompted to read between the lines two distinct implications – space and time. The collapsing or compression of space in part one, and the acceleration or compression of time in part two.



The first part essentially represents the three forms of knowledge, forms that exist in space. When space is collapsed or compressed to the engrossed knower, the knower merges to become one with the rest. So also, the second part essentially points to the acceleration of time, from a state of discontinuity or intermittence to contiguity and compression, where the knower is able to experience the merging with the infinite, Supreme Knowledge, that alone.

\* \* \*

The following comes from a friend in India is a little behind in her reading, which is perfectly fine—anyone can respond to any of this at any time—so this is ostensibly about verse 3. The work as a whole is what we are addressing. This shows the intensity that can come from recovering from travails that once oppressed us. This friend, who I'm going to keep anonymous, is responding specifically to Alice Miller's quotes. I know she is not alone in this complex of problems; it is unfortunately very common in our species. Miller assures us that breaking out of our stagnant positions is well worth the concerted effort it requires:

*Rejection, ostracism, loss of love, and name calling will not fail to affect them; they will suffer as a result and will dread them, but once they have found their authentic self they will not want to lose it. And when they sense that something is being demanded of them to which their whole being says no, they cannot do it. They simply cannot.*

good god...the above is what I went through...when I walked out on my alcoholic abusive husband!  
at that time I loved him to pieces... my walking out was a last resort that maybe would lead to some awakening.  
and I was a mess for almost 3 years, even went back to try again....

BUT by then I had been free and away too long... away from his bullying, emotional and mental blackmail and viciousness... and I actually liked my freedom and saw him for what he was... an arrogant selfish weakling... in complete denial.

*Or with people who, although they did not have this good fortune to begin with, learned later—for example, in analysis—to risk the loss of love in order to regain their lost self. They will not be willing to relinquish it again for any price in the world.*

actually for me it was the above...a self analysis...am not sure I did it to find myself but yes to get away from hell.  
(I had an unfortunate hate relationship with my mother... which I do understand now and do forgive her... but it screwed my childhood.)

*Morality and performance of duty are artificial measures that become necessary when something essential is lacking.*

I started out by loving my husband...ready to forgive his every misdemeanour for the bigger picture of being together... however for 10 long years the lies and the drinking and the viciousness kept getting worse n worse... fear of losing someone I loved and also being financially dependent made me continue till my 40th birthday... somewhere maybe I'd hoped something would sort this mess... (Jesus ?)  
Since there was no help, I decided to leave so he would look at himself and admit he needed help...but he never did...not even today.  
I had such visions of saving him....

*When done correctly, taking responsibility makes us more helpful to our fellow beings, and is not in any way a selfish act*

Scott, I didn't do this correctly... I actually walked out... but with nothing no money no roof... though what this did do was expose my husband to his family... they finally saw him for what he had become: a lying alcoholic.

Even after leaving him I had hope that we could take him to rehab together... but it never happened.

and with time I've started seeing the world on my own and loving it... and am never likely to go back.

Sorry...am still catching up with your notes and this struck a chord

[Later she added]:

Hmmm...

I do know that my messy childhood... made me look for that lack of love in relationships that I should have got out of but didn't... cause I kept thinking I was not good enough and better to have this vicious love then no love at all!!

I never did any therapy but got pulled into Vipassana as I was looking for a form of meditation...and that over a period of time sorted me out...

I've even forgiven my mother (she died when I was 15) for I really do understand now most of the reasons for her behaviour and maybe as an adult I may have tried to ease her pain had she lived... so am at peace there.

Sometimes life steps in and takes your hand... a bit late in life for me but hey better than never :)

These notes are hitting pretty close to the bone! meaning raw truth.

[when I suggested anonymity, she wrote]:

no problem Scott... do use it to help others but yes this and my earlier bit would be better anonymous... not that I have anything to hide but in time someone somewhere might misunderstand this to be accusations and squealings.

See how ingrained we are to keep our darkest secrets still dark when in actuality airing them would make everyone realise that this is not kosher.

Part of my response:

Wow, this is very intense. I want to assure you, you have done the right thing. Sometimes walking away is the only way to help. And what I (and Alice Miller) meant was that you have to help yourself first, to put some distance between you and the impossible problems of friends and family, and only when you have healed will you be properly available for others. The others may not include your ex, it may be other women in the same pickle, who need a strong example of standing up for themselves in a society that treats husbands almost as gods.

You have made great strides already. You stood up when you had to, and you should never regret it, even though it hasn't been easy. Regret that you had to leave, perhaps, but what you did was what was absolutely necessary. In this regard, by the way, Miller is not a proponent of forgiveness, because it can be yet another way of toning down our awareness and paradoxically prolonging the misery. I appreciate forgiveness up to a point, but agree we should not use it as a way to mark "finished" on a story that is far from finished. Self-realization—which is exactly what this is—requires full awareness. Problems are not to be glossed over, but burnt to a crisp with the eye of wisdom. Understanding is much more than forgiveness, but may well include it as an afterthought.

It may be there are areas in your past where you didn't go all the way, but ducked for cover and suppressed some of the misery. Again, this is normal human behavior, and nothing to apologize

for. But it will only be finally over when you can hear advice like Miller's and not feel blasted by intense upset. The poison arrows have to be pulled out and not simply ignored. In *Atmopadesa Satakam* Narayana Guru has offered us a real cure instead of a syrupy placebo, and he is administering it with infinite compassion. I've already quoted Nataraja Guru: a bad disease needs a drastic remedy. The fact that this hits you hard means you are awakening to a deeper level of your own being, in which joy and relief will supplant the buried resentments of your past. You should be very proud of yourself for prying your way out of a situation that many never escape. Stay with it: you are much more than the suffering. We are on a journey to recover our true condition, which is superb and unlimited. To get there, we will have to cross some hard ground.