

Comment on Love Mark Griffin

Student's Comment

I'm pretty fond of surrendering to love but sometimes when I do, I lose my center or feel led astray. I've learned it's because I have trouble separating unconditional love from the attachments of desire and all the things that intertwine with it. During the last couple of weeks I had another such opening where I really felt my heart exploding outward and surging with energy. It was so powerful that it transformed my life but it took so much energy. I felt like all my energy was in my heart. I wasn't even digesting my food. I was floating on a cloud. I felt great but I also felt like I needed to ground. I eventually put my feet back on the ground, but I'm still puzzled as to how to craft that balance between completely surrendering to love and staying connected to the earth.

Mark's Response

That is a fantastic comment. You have actually put your finger on the issue of the path of abandon, the path of love. As you have discovered, when you make a commitment to love, it arises spontaneously and acts upon you and in you with great force and great intensity. It changes your center of gravity, your center of self, and your sense of identity. While the path of love is the swiftest path, it is also dangerous because it moves outside your control.

The commitment to love involves surrendering your life to God. In a manner of speaking, God will be making the decisions for you. You'll be cruising along when suddenly there is a very powerful movement of energy into your heart. It shifts your balance so that you have difficulty maintaining your identity and your basic equilibrium in life. You even have difficulty digesting food. This is all part of the path of love.

What you experienced was a very powerful reversal of the life force. When the kundalini moves with great force into the base of the spine, you feel like you weigh five thousand pounds. Your energy grips the earth, and you'll feel like an anvil or a steel column that's being driven into the earth. As the kundalini rises up into the heart, it begins to draw on the column of bodhicitta, a special column between the heart and the crown of the head where the light of consciousness seats in the body spontaneously. This is called the "heart-mind" and is the place where the physical body of matter, the subtle physical body of energy and the causal body of mental formation all interconnect. This rising is an extremely auspicious event because, once shaktipat is received, the essence of spiritual life turns on the event called "the reversal of the life-force."

From the time that we are born until puberty, our energy is very high and the pineal gland grows every year. When we're children, we operate inside what

modern psychology calls “magical thinking.” We think in terms of a dream-like expression of life. During puberty, the thalamus pours hormones into the body that drive the life force down the spinal column and ignite the sexual glands. The adolescent experiences the growth of muscle, bone, fiber, and the brain. Once this occurs, the energy starts to fall away from the pineal gland and there is a quality of grounding that we go through during puberty that lasts approximately four to five years. Then from ages eighteen to twenty-one we start to solidify. At this point, the secretions of the pineal gland and the upper pineal gland support much of the higher brain functions such as abstract thinking and thought without language.

Receiving shaktipat triggers the reversal of the life force. The life force is drawn back up the spine and into the brain, reigniting the glandular support of the pineal and other (subtle-physical) glands. There is a kind of reheating of the system. It's as if the life force strikes into the column of the sushumna and enters the entire stew of all four bodies. It starts churning them, heating them and purifying them. As they accelerate, the energy moves out of the external fibers, nadis and life-channels of the prana to the seats of the pranas. It streams into the nadis that flow into the chakras and then into the ida and pingala. Finally, when the ida and pingala merge into the sushumna, the life force rises up the sushumna, just like mercury goes up a thermometer as it gets hotter and hotter. As the life force reverses and surges into the brain, the other ninety percent of the brain becomes active and becomes the support and stage for the life of the spirit

You've all heard of different kinds of yoga: jnana yoga, the yoga of mental formations; hatha yoga, the yoga of the physical and subtle physical energy; laya yoga, the dynamics of light; karma yoga, the yoga of selfless service; bhakti yoga, the dynamics of love. Once the kundalini awakens, you begin to perform all of those yogas spontaneously.

If your basic foundation is divine love, bhakti yoga, you'll find that the accumulation of love in your system will cause all of the different yogas to operate simultaneously. They will move in with great intensity and great force, often in a random way. It's not as if the light is merging into the ida and pingala and then into the sushumna, or moving into the second chakra and then into the third. When you're doing a specific yoga, it happens in that way. But when you deal with bhakti yoga, the presence of love, God, and the awakened kundalini inside your system will cause you to move suddenly and with great force. Suddenly there's a connection between you as Self, with God as Self, with Guru as Self, and love is the connector. Suddenly you'll make a spontaneous leap and all of your life force will surge into the heart, lifting up out of the lower centers. The life force will draw away from the lower humors, the lower angels, and there will be an incredible fusion of light at the seat of the heart.

Because it happens so swiftly and so unexpectedly, the light can be disorienting. But if you're going to live the life of love, you have to expect that. You can be

walking down the street and suddenly feel the descent of the presence of the Guru or God very intensely. There is not necessarily an external event that triggers this experience. The event will be internal because love is connecting your life to the spirit and the spirit is on the inside. It comes from the inside out, not the outside in.

When we're oriented to the body and senses, we have a tendency to look for a cause. Something happens inside and we notice the event. Then our mind looks for what caused it to happen; it looks outside and tries to match things up. It's basically just a tale. The world of the spirit and the world of the apparent universe are not the same worlds. Yes, God pervades everything but the world of spirit is invisible and moves according to its own laws.

For example, you could be a person here that's one fraction of a millimeter away from enlightenment, and it's up to God when that last millimeter goes away. You won't even know it until it happens. All of a sudden, with no external event, there will be this massive change, and you'll move from a waking state into a state of deep samadhi, of deep connection with spirit. It's between you, God, Guru and Self. The only way to survive it is to know that you've had shaktipat and know that you're on the spiritual path so, when it occurs, there's some part of you that says, "Oh, yeah! Right! I got shaktipat. I have a Guru. My Guru said that this was going to happen and now it has happened." Somehow that makes it okay.

Often, all we need to know is that something is okay—that God said it's okay or the Guru said it's okay. Sometimes a deep connection with the spirit will happen to a person who didn't have anybody tell them it was okay. They drive themselves crazy and destroy their health because they are so afraid of what's happening to them. But if the Guru and God say it's okay, then, even though an experience is intense and scary, you know you can go through it.

At the same time you want to use your intelligence. You want to use yoga, the dynamics of the breath, and the dynamics of grounding. Those of you who have studied in the Hard Light Center have heard me say "Ground, ground, ground!" and "Breathe, breathe, breathe!" over and over. The breath is the device that moves attention inside the pillar of consciousness. When a spiritual event take place, don't panic. Don't become afraid but realize, "Okay the Guru has decided that he wants to talk to me right now and that's one of the things about the path of love. Well, I was going to go to the dance tonight but maybe I shouldn't do that. Maybe I should just sit home and meditate all night." You'll go through all of the things that you need to go through and you'll feel transformed but you'll cycle through it. It is not the intention of the Guru or God to destroy you or ruin your life but to draw you deeper and deeper into the truth, deeper and deeper into spirit.

On the path of love you can't count on planning—love is wild. When something happens, you have to be able to turn on a dime and say, "Okay, this is really

intense. I'm just going to sit quietly tonight and go inside and listen to what God has to say to me." That will take place and you will change completely. It's so dramatic; it's almost like a death and a rebirth. When you get up from sitting, it's like getting up in the morning. You've gone completely away. Lord knows what has happened to you, but you feel good. Your life force immediately connects back in, and the story line of your life somehow makes sense.

It's important to know that you're on the path of love and to know that you have shaktipat. With those two dynamics alone, the speech of Bhairava, the immediate and sudden awakening, is available to you at any moment. It's a form of grace and a blessing. But when it really happens to you, it can be very disruptive and alarming because of its intensity. It's also something that you have to get used to. The experience of God, the experience of the Guru, or the experience of truth is very intense as a rule. When these large, unbalancing events take place, use your intelligence, your yoga. Use the dynamics of the breath, balance, and gravity.

I always suggest that students engage in a physical culture--hatha yoga, tai chi, weight lifting, or straight exercise. It doesn't matter. Have something so that when the light hits you, you have a way to talk with your body and work the light into your system. A lot of light is being shoehorned into your body, and it's always being increased. You need a way of working all that extra energy into your system so the body stays open and supple. Sometimes, if you don't do this, the energy will build up to such a degree that it will cause a physical spasm or a catch of some kind in the spine. There will be intense pressure and magnetism on the inside and outside of the spine. Your spine is at different weights so there's more light in one part of your spine than in another. The spine will catch at various levels of magnetism, and you'll have some kind of uncomfortable physical event. That's why it's important to have some kind of physical culture where the body and the spine is worked so that you always have a way of keeping the body in touch with what's going on inside of you. A physical culture is also very grounding and helps maintain your equilibrium.

God is always pushing and pushing, looking for an opening. Your average human being doesn't have that many openings. There are the basic changes in the four phases of life—birth, childhood, puberty and adulthood. At each of those stages, there's a change of psychology and, as the change of psychology takes place, there's a change of identity. It's part of what we generally call growing up as humans. The average person has maybe five or six life-changing events in their life—the four basic stages of life and then a couple of extras based on the dynamics of their life. But in spiritual life, you're compressing the events of transformation. The spirit pushes through any doorway in any of the four bodies it can and expresses itself as spirit inside your system. This turns your attention inward. It causes you to stop and say, "Wait a minute. There's something going on inside that's not apparent outside."

As spiritual warriors we train ourselves and condition ourselves to deal with the impact of the spirit, to deal with the impact of God at a highly compressed pace. We can deal with the force of a very powerful blow from the spirit, assimilate it in a short amount of time, and regain our equilibrium with a new point of balance. Then another event can take place.

Stringing together these transformations and building them up at a stage of compression, produces the critical mass of realization. The experience of realization includes the falling away of all barriers. We discover that our entire agenda as an individual identity is based on a kind of script that we hold in place. It is the interaction of that script with the events of the world that we call our lives. In spiritual life we are dealing with the opening of inner doorways that will eventually undermine that script. As this happens, we condition ourselves for that event through yogic training. Once we really get cooking, transformation takes place with every cycle of the breath and we have spiritual events that feel like breakthroughs on a regular basis. At the other end of all this spiritual activity is realization, which is the absolute collapse of the controlling aspect of the script and the taking over of our life by the spirit.

Right now your script rules and the spirit operates in a nice, organized way. You meditate when you want to feel spirit. You open up a doorway, and spirit comes in. It seems like you're in control but that is an illusion. Eventually all of this adds up to a shifting of the equilibrium and the spirit begins to rule.

Because love is like an infinite lubricant, it greases the wheels in all directions, and you experience events from the wild and dangerous side of the path of love. Suddenly the spirit surges into your heart and reverses your life force from the base to halfway up the spine. This is an extremely important and positive event and will continue to occur. But notice what happened—spirit pushed you past your comfort level but didn't push you way off into outer space. It leveled off and gave you the chance to find a new equilibrium. You'll notice that now it's a basic experience and when it happens again you'll be able to think, "Well, if I just meditate, I'll be okay."

In the meantime, practice the bellows breath so you can take control of the entire spinal column with every breath. In doing this, you will draw spirit towards you with greater force. Once you get good at this type of breathing, you will be able to breathe in love. You can attach it to the prana and saturate the life force with the force of love. An enormous amount of the power of love will move in your system. This power will sustain you through all things. It will destroy fear. You will have infinite courage. It will still the mind. Not only that, it will stop the mind. And in the voice of love you will learn to transfer your identity and trust to spirit, to God.