



September 27, 2023 Wednesday Evening with Aaron

Knowing Ourselves, Our Essence, as the Light; Sharing on how do you connect most deeply with the light essence of yourself?

Barbara: ...(1989; I had just consciously met Aaron, and...) Friends were asking if they could ask him questions. I said, "Why don't we all get together and Aaron can answer your overlapping questions. " Wednesday night worked for people. So here we are, thirty-four years later, still meeting on Wednesday nights.

At the same time, people wanted to learn meditation from him, and we put that on a different night. It was the same three, four or five people; it started with three, then four, then five, and more; there were wonderful questions.

In the beginning most people just chose to come with Aaron, or just chose to come for meditation, saying "Channeling? What is that? I just came for the meditation instructions." Or, "I don't want the meditation instructions, I came just to hear Aaron." But within a year, almost everybody was coming both nights. I didn't advertise it, other than this; Aaron said, "You have to tell people what's happening." So, we put a little hand-written flyer on a bookstore bulletin board. Crazy Wisdom was in those days a very new little bookstore.

And, as I said, I remember the Wednesday night when I was meditating back in my bedroom, preparing for the evening, and Hal came in and said, "I don't know where to put everybody; we have over thirty people." So, we were kind of scrunched in.

About that time Deep Spring was forming a board of Directors and forming to be a non-profit organization. This room where I'm sitting tonight was my sculpture studio, I wasn't doing much sculpture in 1991, so after dealing with a very crowded living room, the sangha refinished this room and we moved in here.

Is L on tonight? I don't see L. L has a woodlot up north . He cut trees down, planed them into boards, and brought all this wood. We had people up on scaffolds nailing boards into the ceiling, with F supervising it. (showing it on the zoom screen) And here we are. We've been in a site on Washtenaw, and then a second site, and then at Interfaith Center. And now we're back here again. It feels like coming home.

Welcome to 2023 Evenings with Aaron. We're delighted to have you all.

It's been a good summer, and I hope it has been for all of you. Some of you who were here last April, May and June will remember that I had a very serious foot infection that got into the bone in my foot. I was not allowed to walk or swim. I was off my foot until the end of July.

But it has completely healed, and I'm delighted to say I saw the doctor today and he gave me a big thumbs-up and said it looks great. I'm delighted to know that it healed.



It was a powerful couple of months for me—four months, actually—because I could not do all the active things I normally do. I could not walk. I couldn't take care of Hal. I couldn't cook my own food. I couldn't do anything. I had to keep my foot elevated, so I spent a lot of time sitting on my deck meditating.

Now I love to meditate, but I really did not want a command performance. So, I could see that I had been putting off looking deeper at some of the things that I needed to look at: my, at that point, still not resolved grief over Hal's stroke and the big change in my life. Hal is my husband, and he had a major stroke in January 2018, so it's been over five years. But I was just keeping myself so busy, and I was so busy taking care of him. And with Covid, bringing him home from the nursing home and learning how to take care of him at home. They were, I won't call them good excuses; they were valid reasons. But still, I was avoiding going deeper into that place of grief. I really needed to do that and to release it.

I had the opportunity to look at old places from past lives of feeling unworthy and afraid, as I was feeling when I brought Hal home, feeling isolated, and so forth. So here I was, alone in the house with Hal, trying to take care of him and me, with caregivers coming in to take care of him some of the day. And I had to look at those feelings of being cut off from the world, and alone and helpless, aging. We've all aged. The Buddha's teachings on sickness, old age and death; we've all done that countless times.

Letting go. Just being present with the joy of the moment. I have a pretty back yard and a very small garden with a very small pond and a little waterfall, flowers, tomatoes. A very pleasant place to sit. I certainly was not suffering, sitting on that deck, except that I wanted to be out on the lake swimming. I wanted to be able to stand just because I couldn't stand. Nothing wrong with sitting, but when you can't stand, grasping comes.

So, it was a very powerful summer for me. Then August came, and I did get out to the lake. I got some swimming in, not as much as I'd like, but some swimming and kayaking. And now here we are. Suddenly, it's September; suddenly, it's autumn. Life moves on. So that's my greeting to all of you.

Aaron is ready to come in now...

Aaron: My blessings and love to you all. I am Aaron. It's truly a joy to see you all here, to have this opportunity to talk with you, to share with you.

I am the Light. You are the Light. You are the light of the world. You are the light of the universe. You are the Light of the multiverses. Have you heard that term? If there is one universe, of course there are multiple, infinite universes, or so it would seem; I've never tried to count them.



My new book. I will be channeling it with the help of other spirit, and Colette will be helping us, doing her very clear channeling. We don't have a final name for it yet, but I'm dubbing it temporarily *Let There Be Light*.

Light is an ultimate reality. Darkness is a relative reality. It exists; we cannot say that there is no darkness, only that it has no *ultimate* reality.

This earth was planned as a plane of light. This is part of what we will discuss on Saturday at the workshop, where Yeshua and I, Ariel (who is my teacher), Mary, Love, and others will come in, some or all of them. We will be talking about the planning of this earth realm as a place of light and discussing the origins of consciousness before earth and then *on* earth, and the work of consciousness on earth.

Consciousness is a powerful gift. It goes hand in hand with free will. In the time before time, when everything knew its unity and had no concept of the individuated self, there of course could not be free will, because whose will would it be?

Let me say it a bit differently. There was the will of the One, of the Divine Creator, however you name that, of the Unconditioned itself, of Love. But what does it mean to move into the concept of individuation and then express that individuation either through a lens of fear or a lens of love?

I'm being very brief in this part of my talk, because we'll go into this for some hours on Saturday.

But, of course, there were other heavy density planets before the Earth, co-created with the intention to bring forth light. And yet, they could not sustain that high vibration. Why do we then suppose that Earth will be able to do that? Because you, my friends, are waking up. You are coming into a much deeper clarity of your own innate truth of being and of your intentions that you carried with you into the incarnation.

You have tried this many times, and each time you've gone a little bit higher, and a little bit higher. Each time around, the vibration of the Earth itself has come up. The Earth has gained the stability to hold that higher vibration.

If you take a tuning fork and sound the sound, it will play for a few seconds and then it will die away. Think of the Earth as a tuning fork that is learning how to hold this high vibration and send it out throughout the multiverses as a high beacon of light and love. That can only happen when there are beings upon the Earth truly holding the aspiration to raise their own vibration, to bring themselves into resonance with higher consciousness, not only for their own well-being, but for the well-being of all. And thus the cry, "Let there be Light!"

Your Bible has this as almost the opening words of the creation of the Earth. "Let there be light!" Why do you think those words came? Because of all the very high vibrational



beings who had helped to co-create the Earth. Not necessarily one hand up there, saying, "Let there be light!" but so many brothers and sisters of light of very high vibration but without physical bodies, who believed together---and rather than 'believed', I would use the word 'knew'---knew the possibility of light grounded in material form, and the power of that light.

And then it was handed to those of you who made the decision, "Yes, I will incarnate. I will try this new place, because I know myself as light on that plane." Without the material body, you *did* know yourself as light. But then you came through, and there was so much going on around you.

You agreed as you came in to forget the essence of who you were. It was important that you agreed to forget. Here's where free will comes in, the free will to forget and say, "What's going on is not my fault, and I can't make it better. And I'm lost in the darkness," or the free will to say, "Even amidst any chaos I encounter, and any darkness I encounter, I choose to be the light, to bring forth the light, to live the light."

Throughout ancient history there were beings that came in as light to speak to the darkness. I'm talking about very ancient history. Most of those names are not in your memory. But there are those great Masters, such as Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, who basically taught that we are beings of free will, who can choose love. Our suffering comes when we choose fear and darkness, grasping and hatred. But you *can* be free, and he taught that freedom.

Then Yeshua, who came in and taught the power of love, and the free will choice of love. I cannot name all of these great Masters, but these are two of the most well-known. So many beings throughout history have come in to support humans in the knowing of themselves as light and as love.

At Deep Spring, one of our predominant practices is meditation. We are thusly "Deep Spring Center for Meditation and Spiritual Inquiry." The spiritual inquiry part is more or less what I'm doing tonight, but also the very important aspect of meditation—Vipassana or mindfulness meditation, Pure Awareness meditation, the practices of the heart, and so forth. The practices that help you remember the truth of your being, and that you are not merely this consciousness that stumbled into this heavy density realm, perhaps imagining having been pushed here by karma, but that you are light, love, are awake beings that said, somewhere back in history, "I will go. I will come to Earth and prove that a heavy density being can express itself deeply as light and as love."

There's a beautiful song that Barbara loves. I will not try to sing it, but rather just say the first verse.

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry. All who live in dark and pain my hand will save. I, who made the stars at night, I will make their darkness bright. Who will bring my love to them? Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord. I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if you'll lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

Do those words resonate as truth for you? Somewhere in time before time, there was the call, and you said, "Here I am. I will go, if you will lead me, if love will lead me. And I will hold all those who suffer in my heart. And I will remember and wake up. I will hold this ground of love and make it available not only to the sentient beings on the planet, but to the planet itself, which is herself a sentient being. I will help to anchor that love and light into this earth plane and raise the vibration."

Then the harmony, the high chords of love, can echo out throughout this universe and beyond this universe into the multiverses, into all places wherein we say, "Love and light prevail." And we say to the darkness, "You have free will to abide in darkness. I do not attempt to take that from you. When you are ready, the door is open to come into the light and know yourself as light."

This, to me, is both the honor and the beauty of this earth plane and of human form. A tree can know itself as light. A snail can know itself as light, but not in the same way as a human can. A human can sustain a higher vibration more than can the snail, or even the dog. And so, we keep moving into higher and higher consciousness and knowing ourselves as the light.

You are the light. But you come to me and say, "Aaron, I cannot understand myself as light, because I get lost in the darkness of myself." And that is indeed very painful. There are so many who get lost, mired in the darkness, in their own fears, anger, anguish and confusion.

Here we have the beautiful meditation practices that help us. I would say here that (this coming) Saturday we have four hours, so we'll have time for background and more meditation practice and talking about how we use the practice. Of course, many of you are in the class, where we practice this on a regular basis.

But basically, as we sit and meditate, we do not try to hold some special mind state and push everything else away. We invite presence with whatever is predominant in our experience. Breathing in and breathing out, breathing in and breathing out, presence with what is predominant in our experience.

Sometimes what is predominant is pleasant; sometimes it's unpleasant. Barbara described how she sat on the deck for many hours a day, up to eight, ten, twelve hours a day this summer, unable to get up and walk, unable to tend her garden, unable to go for a swim if it was hot, or take a walk in the cooler woods. There was nothing unpleasant about her experience. It's a pretty, shady yard with a lovely flower garden. Cherry tomatoes, bright red, popping out with their sweetness. Frogs jumping into the pond. What made it unpleasant was her grasping, "I want to be somewhere else."

And so, her practice—and she has done this practice for years, but she still had to work at it. Her practice was to note the contracting energy, “Grasping, grasping. Breathing in, I am aware of the grasping; breathing out, I allow space for the grasping.” Gradually opening to the question, who is grasping? Can I find any separate self here? Barbara, of course, but who is this Barbara? What is there beyond Barbara? What is bigger than Barbara? What is this field of awareness, this love, this presence, of which I am one expression? The Unconditioned itself, or God, or Goddess, however you want to call it. Is the grasping coming from those places, or is it coming from the personalized ego self?

And in meditation you begin to see how you keep recreating and reinforcing that ego self and rolling back into the suffering, unable to sustain the high vibration because you keep getting caught in the small self.

We do not wish in any way to invalidate the small self. Somebody has to take out the garbage. There needs to be some aspect of consciousness. But the consciousness is just one tool, just as the body is. It is not your essence.

The work, then, of humans on today's Earth, as I see it, is to connect with that essence. To get to know that essence and distinguish it from what I would call the small self. To distinguish, if I may put it this way, between mundane consciousness—which is part of the aggregates of the self, just as the body and mind are among the aggregates; conscious is an aggregate—and the awareness, the presence, the awake state that is the essence, that is truly the expression of the Unconditioned.

It takes work, because the human is schooled from childhood to dwell in the small self. And truly, the way the human mind seems to work, there does need to be some grounding in the ego before one moves past the ego. We teach the young child, “You, *you* are special. I love *you*. *You* can do it. *You* are good. *You* are kind.” So, we emphasize that *you* in the beginning.

There needs to be some foundation of self before you can move beyond the self. And that foundation of self really works best when it knows itself as loved, as cherished, and does not live in fear. Then, as the child matures, they become ready to let go of belief in the self as who they truly are.

I mentioned the term *skandhas*, or aggregates. The body is an aggregate. The mind is an aggregate; the mental aggregate, the physical aggregate, the aggregate of feelings, the aggregate of consciousness.

Many years ago, probably over thirty years ago, I sat coaching Barbara as she sat on a beach with the waves arising. Watching the waves breaking; coming down on the shore and rolling up onto the beach almost right up to where she sat, and then back into the sea. I asked her to consider each of these aggregates, starting with form. Certainly that

wave has form. It arises, it takes a shape, then it diminishes and slaps down and goes back into the sea. Can we say that the wave has any independent existence? No, of course not. There is nothing there but sea taking a form, expressing itself as a form, and then releasing that form—no different than you.

I asked her to look at—she couldn't see this as clearly in the waves—but to look at the mental aggregate, the sea of thought arise as she would see a wave. She could see the thought arises out of the vast sea, takes a shape and then dissolves again. It has no ultimate reality. That does not mean that thoughts don't have any power, but they have no ultimate reality. Even a kind thought has no ultimate reality; it's just a thought, an emotion, a feeling, a body sensation. Each might arise and then it passes away. It has no ultimate reality. In whom is it arising? Does anybody own it? You are experiencing it, but it is not of the nature of self. It arose from conditions, and it will pass.

It is in this kind of exploration through meditation that you can begin to look at the negative thoughts that arise, the fear-based thoughts, the angry thoughts, the greedy thoughts, the thoughts of shame and unworthiness, and to see that these thoughts have arisen out of series of conditions, and they are not self; they are not your essence. Only then can the meditator begin to ask the question, if these are not essence, then what is? Who or what am I?

As you begin to open deeply to that truth, to start to trust who you think---let me phrase this carefully---what your deepest heart essence tells you, what *are* you? What remains? Love. What is love? I cannot answer that for you.

But you will find that if you go deep into this kind of meditation practice, exploring each arising of the mind and body and seeing it arisen from conditions and dissolving and then resting in the space into which it dissolved, eventually the space seems to expand. It holds the thought, the feeling, the sensation, just as the sea holds the wave.

Gradually, the physical body may seem to dissolve in such meditation. The mental body may seem to dissolve. The whole sense of an ego, of a self seems to dissolve, and everything is filled with light. The heart expands. The deepest sense of interconnection with all that is, is opened to. And there is a deep knowing—no one knowing, just knowing: "I am that. I am love."

Your world seems to be filled with pain and chaos in these days. There are floods, fires and earthquakes that are killing so many people. There are people with their machine guns—I don't know the names of them, but those "bang, bang, bang, bang, bang" kind of guns killing so many people. There are people who don't think twice about killing another person. The environment is sinking into some deterioration. The elements themselves are sinking into a lower energy.

And you call out to me, "Aaron, what can we do?" Well, first of all, there have always been times of higher energy and times of lower energy, and times of higher energy



again. Right now, you're in a bit of an ebb of lower energy, but it's not hopeless—not at all. Think of it as a teacher, a reminder. "Oh, I forgot. I am here to remember that I am love. And I've been forgetting that, and I'm not fully doing my part. I need to come back and pay attention. Thank you, Teacher."

It doesn't mean we *want* the teaching, but perhaps we need it. It's like the child who is asked to remain after school because he failed his arithmetic or spelling test. The teacher is not punishing him but wants to spend time with that child to go over the multiplication table, or the spelling words, to help the child remember what it needs to know.

I do not see the negativity in the world, or the devolution of the elements and of environmental conditions, as any proof that anything *bad* is happening, but simply as a reminder we need to pay attention.

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord, where you lead me. I will hold your people, I will hold your world in my heart.

We need to remember and to pay attention, and to recommit—over and over, to recommit—to remember the intention. And instead of railing against misfortune and pain, to say, "Thank you, Teacher. I have been forgetting. You've got my attention now. And my choice is not to hate what is happening in the world, but to more thoroughly ground myself in love and light. And to remember that we are all love and light, and that we *can* bring this forth."

Truthfully, that is why each of you has incarnated: to do this work of love. Are you in it with me? Yes? Let's do it! There are groups like yourselves all over the world doing this work of remembering that they are love and that together we can make a difference, not just for your personal self or for your family, community, country, world, but literally for the universe, because there are beings of darkness out there. Not of ultimate darkness; there is no such thing as ultimate darkness. But there *are* beings who have forgotten that they are light—so completely forgotten that they hide in the darkness and use the darkness as their tool.

And the only answer to such beings is to say no from a place of love, from your heart. And to say no in that way takes going into your own bits of darkness—sometimes big areas of darkness—and saying, "No. I will not become lost in the darkness."

It's very hard for Barbara to come out of channeling and to speak in a focused way, but I'm going to ask her to do this, because I want her to speak some to you about what she was working with this summer. I'm not saying this to put her up on a pedestal in any way; she is doing her work, as you are all doing your work. But I find her inspiring in that she was able to take this time of darkness in herself and use it in a positive way. She may not be perfectly articulate in the beginning, since her consciousness has been out



of the body, but she will do the best that she can, and then I'll come back. I thank you. I am Aaron.

Barbara: Thank you, Aaron. One moment please, Aaron is talking to me... Okay, when my consciousness has been out of the body, it's hard to come back and ground myself back into the body quickly. He says, "Relax and just share."

I was scared. I'm eighty years old, but I feel like I'm going to make it to a hundred. My mom lived to ninety-seven, healthy to ninety-six, and I'm a younger generation, and I'm healthy. And I have a deep aspiration to share the Dharma. This is my life and my joy.

So, there I was, faced with, "If this doesn't heal, we're going to have to amputate at least the toe, maybe the foot, or even the whole leg." It was terrifying; nobody wants to lose a leg.

Meditating, I found myself drawn to go into the places of darkness in myself. I saw particularly a karmic ancestor—and I am given the blessing to be able to see some karmic ancestors, those for whom there is something unresolved and a reason to see them. To see this young woman; this girl child, at first.

Her nickname was Miri. That's what they called her. Her father had died before she was born, and her mother grieved so terribly at the death of her late husband that she was not really able to take care of Miri. So, Miri had the experience of being an orphan. She had loving friends and family, a loving grandmother and people who took care of her. But she felt, "There must be something wrong with me to have been abandoned by both my parents." This was her child consciousness.

Then she was sent to a school, as many of the children in her community were. She lived in an Essene community, and she was sent to one of the mystery schools in Alexandria. There, she was in some ways deeply abused. I won't go into the nature of the abuse, but it was both physical and emotional, and it furthered her sense of unworthiness and shame. The rage that came up.

I've seen expressions of this through the past thirty years, and I worked hard and thought that I had really come to a place where I was past it. But I saw that there were still some threads of that unworthiness that, I won't say began in Miri, but were carried on further by Miri, and that until I could resolve it, I could not fully be the light that I aspired to be. And I could not honestly teach the dharma I want to teach unless I could be honest with myself.

So, I needed to look at those places of darkness and pain. Who wants to go into the darkness? Many of you have been in classes. Last year, we spent a lot of time with path of sacred darkness and Aaron leading us in guided meditations into the darkness with the support of each other, the support of the sangha, and in the small groups. People were working gently to open to places of darkness in themselves and release them.

I saw that if I'm going to teach this, I have to fully deal with it. I can't say fully; I'm not saying I have fully done it. But I would certainly never have sat there on that deck for all of those hours if I could get up and do my gardening, or take a walk, or go for a swim in the lake. If I had anything else I could do, even sit at my desk, and do private counseling sessions with people. But I had to sit with my foot in the air. I couldn't sit here at the desk. There was no place I could go but right there on my deck, on my recliner chair with my foot in the air, meditating.

Well, I'm lucky I was given a heavenly realm in which to do this. I have a huge, seventy foot spruce tree here out my window. Hal and I planted that tree over fifty years ago as an eighteen inch baby spruce, and now it's grown into a magnificent tree. There are a half dozen other spruces next to it, but this is the biggest one.

So, there I sat looking up into the spruce branches, feeling the power of the spruce and its energy, and the blue sky, and the sunshine, and the occasional rain, with a little umbrella keeping the rain off my face, but watching it coming down all around me on the deck. Earth, air, fire, water—the purity of the elements. And in finding the power in myself, the power of love, to go into this darkness and release this darkness. We can't just do it for ourselves; we do it for all beings.

I'm no one special here in doing this. I know a number of you, whom I've spoken to in the past six months, who have done similar work. We're all doing it.

But now, at the end of this period of time, and with foot healed, I'm grateful for what seems like the harshness of those months, and for the profound healing that I found, releasing Miri and Barbara and the whole line of karmic ancestors from feelings of unworthiness and negativity,

That doesn't mean that I will never have negative thoughts again. Of course, I will; I'm human. But a little less trapped in them.

I think this is what Aaron was asking me to talk about. Looking into this path of sacred darkness. Finding the light in ourselves there in the darkness, and how powerful that light is when we allow ourselves to experience it and express it out into the world. That we truly *can* do this and *need* to do this, because this is why we came into incarnation.

And of course, we're terrified of it; that goes without saying. It's okay. Just because we're terrified doesn't mean we can't do it. Holding space for the fear. Loving ourselves. Not forcing ourselves beyond what we feel we can do in this moment, but increasingly finding the power that we have to deepen in love.

Aaron, is that sufficient? He says, "Yes, thank you." Are you going to come back, Aaron? He says, "Yes, please." He is saying that he wanted me to tell my story and did not want to try to tell it for me.



So, I have a question for you, Aaron. Would you say that in some way I created this infection in the foot as a way to learn this? Aaron, I'm going to ask you to incorporate and answer that question. You know what my question is, so please, you take the body.

Aaron: I am Aaron. My blessings and love to you once again. No, Barbara did not consciously create an infection in her foot. Rather, the overriding intention was to heal this past karma because of different factors.

She has what's called a hammertoe; the toe bends in and hits the ground instead of lying flat, so that it rubs the ground. And it rubbed a sore. It's happened a number of times before. She's put medicine on it, bacterial medicine, and it's healed. But for whatever reason, it did not heal this time. It was not her intention for it not to heal. Simply, there were bacteria that her foot came in contact with. If the conditions are present, the results will appear. So, I do not think her intention was part of the condition. Her intention was to learn.

Yes, she could have found ways that were less painful to learn. But she was not willing to sit still long enough to do it, because it was too threatening, too frightening, so something had to hold her in place.

And eventually, because of her willingness to work with the doctor and to follow orders—keep the foot dry and elevated, and not walk on it—because she was willing to do that (because she did not want to lose her foot), she was literally a prisoner there. She had nowhere to go. Well, she could have read books, but how many sci-fi or whatever books can one read, day after day after day, before one finally has to get honest with oneself and say, "What am I avoiding?"

Present with things as they are. Present with fear. Present with the human condition. And present with the awakened essence of the human. Moving into that beautiful essence.

Barbara doesn't hear me now, but no, Barbara, you did not create that in order to learn this. It came as a multitude of conditions; especially, just the foot meeting bacteria. Somewhere you walked on the grass barefoot and there were some bacteria. There was a little open wound on the toe, and so the infection entered the toe. This is how the human body is.

The important thing for Barbara to remember, and others of you, is that the intention to heal the emotional body and the physical body and the mental body, and to release self-identification with those bodies, comes from a higher place of love. And *that* Barbara co-created. And that is what each of you are co-creating, just from being here with us tonight.

We've only had an hour to talk now. On Saturday, we'll have four hours, and we'll go into this much deeper. So, if it intrigues you, please do register. Saturday's session is the first of three workshops, all with a similar focus. In the second one we will focus more on non-duality: the non-duality of positive and negative polarity; the non-duality of light and darkness; the non-duality of the divine feminine and the divine masculine; and how your present incarnation is giving you an opportunity to move beyond these dualities and open into a place of much more clarity and open-hearted energy, taking you into a deeper connection with essence, with love.

I hope I've inspired some of you here. And I know that for some of you, it may be late at night and you may need to leave the talk. And if you're not here for the questions, that's okay. You'll get an audio recording of it, I believe. Everyone who was here tonight will get the audio. So, we'll take a break and come back in five minutes... I am Aaron.

(break)

Barbara: Welcome back, and we'll go to the floor now for questions and sharing. Aaron is asking, if you are willing to share, how do you connect most deeply with the light essence of yourself? What works for you to support that?

Q: In answer to Aaron's question, what works to support nurturing my deepest essence, the two things that seem to nurture me the most, to really bring it close, one is to be in nature in some way or another. Some way of connecting with nature, whether it is an animal, or a plant, or whatever version of nature. Outdoors, looking at it, being in it, feet on the earth, lying on the earth. And the other thing is, when I make music, with voice or with an instrument, and I do it from a place of not knowing, from a place of just letting it come through me, then it feels like a prayer, and I feel like I'm connecting to something greater than me. As soon as I try to make it something, then it changes, mostly. But anyway, those are the two ways.

Barbara: Thank you. Are there others who wish to answer Aaron's question or just to share?

Q: I would say that, first of all, I have to meditate every day. It's really important for me to connect to that part of myself, usually in the morning. That's very important, to have that practice.

The second thing is, well for me, I've been writing this book for six years. This is a book on the Yoga Sutras. And I finally surrendered to the fact that the reason I'm doing this isn't to publish something, but it's to learn. Because each of these sutras have so much in them that I really have to go very deeply into myself to really understand what they really mean to me. I study so obsessively. It's one thing to just write off, "Oh, this means this, and this means that," because I've read this and I've read that, but it's another thing to actually go inside with each one and see what does that really mean to me. So, all of a sudden I'm enjoying writing because I don't feel this urge that I have to finish it.

Barbara: I'm really glad to hear that, Q. This is what makes us authentic teachers for others, to be willing to go that deep into your own experience.

Q: The other thing... I really love reading the words of really wise people from different traditions. I'm really familiar with the Indian yoga tradition, and through Aaron and Barbara I've been familiar with the Vipassana tradition. But I've been reading some Tibetan Buddhists works, and there's something about having things phrased in a different way that opens something for me. Again, it kind of unlocks my experience beyond the mental so that I'm not just caught in these ideas. That's how I basically try to find the light.

Today, when I was thinking about this program, I thought of asking Aaron, "Do I have a spiritual ego?" And I know that I do, but is it helpful? I think it's helpful and harmful at the same time, to see myself as spiritual, to see myself as anything other than just what I am.

Barbara: He says when you say do you have spiritual ego, do you mean having an ego that wants to be spiritual, wants to advance spiritually? He says he believes we all do, and that that's not a bad thing; it's what pushes you along. But perhaps then toward the end it's one of the last things to go. But as long as it's there, just say thank you to it and make sure you don't let it be in charge.

Others?

Q: I can't say I have an infallible process, but one of the things that I find often works for me, either in meditation or even standing and just looking about the world (*unclear*), is to envision myself with connection to the energies that are above and also to the earth below. To feel grounded into the earth and feel that I'm actually a conduit of energy and expression of that energy. And then if I can, at that point, to enter into a pure awareness where I can have a both/and sense of duality. I can find that my perspective is expanded, is more encompassing, and less a sense of myself and more a sense this is a process, this is something that is happening, and that there's a witness here to experience it.

Barbara: Thank you. Aaron is not incorporating here. He says that it's important that we not try to dispense with the human. The human is a very vital tool for this incarnation, and we treasure the human. We just ask that the ego not be in charge.

Q: Your last comment reminded me of something we learned from a teacher about thirty years ago, Brugh Joy. He said that for the ego to think that it's in charge is like the flea on the hair on the tip of the tail of the dog thinking that it IS the dog.

Barbara: And yet, it's important that we honor the fact that there is an ego and this is part of the human experience. We don't feel we should not have a body; we know that if

we're human, we live in a body. If we're human, we're going to experience a thinking body, a mental body. If we're human, we're going to experience an emotional body. This is part of the human.

It feels to me, from my experience, like I need to honor all of these bodies, but not make them the boss. To know that they're servants.

Q: I have a sort of a side thing. I want you all to meet Baba (*their cat*). A woman who is a channel for animals, we had another animal that was sick, and she said that Baba was John (Orr)'s soulmate. So I would like you all to meet Baba, John's soul mate. He's been much closer to me this month. Our joke is that he came to live with his soulmate, Baba.

Barbara: I really did not know that you had a cat. He's a beautiful cat!

Q: Yes. He's eighteen years old. And he does love John more than me. He's more drawn to John than to he is to me. But I feed him.

Barbara: I'm sure he misses John, looking around the house for him. (*John is in India.*)

Q: Yes. He's setting for me. I'd like to share a little thing that happened to me at work recently, that really struck me.

I work in home health. I was with this man who was in his late eighties, mid-eighties, maybe, and he had just gotten out of ICU. He's just the kindest, most present and calm person. I live in the South. He's a southern, very devout Christian. And he said, "You know, they kept asking me in the hospital, I was in the ICU and they said that I was gonna die." He was on a catheter and has a lot of medical things going on, and he said the doctor came in and said, "Why are you so calm and content?" And he said, "Well, I know who my friend is. I know that God's with me all the time, and He's in charge. Why should I get upset? It's whatever is supposed to happen. I'm not driving." And I was so humbled by his total sincerity. And who's learning from who, here? Anyway, it's a real gift to be reminded; it's helpful.

Barbara: That's beautiful! And, as for the cat, we can have many different soulmates, and they take many different forms. There's not just one soulmate.

Others?

Q: (Re) Aaron's question, how do know as light, it's been a long process for me. Back a year or two ago, when Love started talking to us, Love made us repeat, "I am Love. I am Light." And so, I say that to myself regularly, and I ask myself, "Well, how am I light?"

Then I was at an open retreat in the fall some years back. It was quite a joyous retreat. And I saw in the trees that the leaves were sort of alive with energy. Some time after

that one of Aaron's Daily Quotes said, "The leaves aren't separate from the wind or the air; they inter-are." So, I remembered the tree and thought, "Oh, that must be what he's talking about."

So, I asked myself the question, "How do I inter-are with everything?" And this year I took the summer off. I'm usually so "nose to the grindstone," but I needed it. And then, suddenly September was coming, and it was there. And I said, "I need to get serious here."

I love the Deep Spring archives. I ended up going on them and looking up some terms. And something that I had heard many times before, or read, just led me to this place where holding the ultimate and the relative worked better in my experience in a place of center. In that place we realize, here's something that I can hold in that center. So I go there and hold it and reach for the other side of the bridge, the Dharmakaya side, the supramundane. So I did that, and I started realizing that there was light there. And I thought, "Oh, is this how I am light?" I haven't drawn any conclusions about that, but it's promising. I still have to explore more. So, that's what I have to contribute.

Barbara: Thank you. That was beautiful. We keep having these sometimes-huge moments of awakening, sometimes just little ones. But gradually, I find for myself, if I'm willing to let go of the beliefs that I have of this is this, and that is that—this is how it should be or shouldn't be—and just be in the moment, suddenly something lights up.

I want to see if I can screenshare, and if I can, I want to share two photographs that really lit up things for me this past week.

I came into the room two days ago and found Hal and Lester (*the cat*) sitting like this. It was just so beautiful. There was so much light in the two of them. Can you see that picture? You can see that Hal is looking out the window and Lester is just cuddling, and you can see the love flowing between them. Hal's just very at peace and joyful, and it touched my heart. It brought tears to my eyes, it was so beautiful.



Here's the other picture. There was a dark sky, and I thought, "Oh, a storm is coming." And then, suddenly the sun broke through the clouds. So much light right there in the tree. There's the dark, stormy sky and—light!



So I just wanted to share those things. Just moments like that so much bring me back to remembering the light. It's not a huge awakening experience. It's just, pay attention! It's always here; it's all around me.

Anyone else?

Aaron sends his blessings and love to you all. He knows a few of you are already registered for Saturday and that perhaps he will see more of you then. And he'll see you next month for Evenings With Aaron.

Okay, is there anything else? I'll see you all next month. Good to see you after the summer, those whom I have not seen, and that's all. Goodnight!