The Path To Awakening

What is awakening, or union with God, or life's final fulfillment? What brings lasting peace, joy, a feeling that one has reached the ultimate goal of life?

I have spent a great deal of time and energy in an attempt to find my way toward answers to these questions, in search of as much insight, wisdom, and understanding as I could find, in order to open into freedom, love, peace, meaning, and joy. Further, I know a number of very bright and dedicated people who have given as much or more time and energy to this pursuit, whether they called it awakening, a deeper connection to the Divine, becoming one with the Tao, or salvation. Yet no one I know is enlightened, in a state of union all the time, or resting continuously in the ultimate state the wisdom traditions describe as possible. Many, like myself, have had moments of dramatic openings into another dimension, of experiencing great awareness, of feeling a profound connection to the larger picture within which we exist. But no one I know has stayed in that place permanently. After profound moments, the most dedicated seekers I know have found themselves back in an ego life. Thus, my experience tells me that reaching the ultimate state and being able to stay there is quite rare.

Of course, the number who have reached the ultimate depends on how you define it. I will give my definition a bit later, but it is important now to say that, although reaching complete fulfillment is rare, there do seem to have been a few saints and sages through history who have done so—which means it is not an impossible aim. Any one of us can aspire to reach the ultimate that life offers.

But in the context of the rarity of the occurrence, the number of people today who talk about having achieved "instant awakening," becoming "non-dual," finding "instant salvation," are able to live in complete "selflessness," or dwell permanently in "emptiness" gives me pause. I have no doubt that a lot of people have had moments of seeing the interconnectedness of all things, have awakened for a time to the whole picture, have temporarily become one with the Absolute. And, when a person is in that experience, has moved into that dimension, such a person will see their small ego self as unimportant—perhaps even feel that it does not exist. Very few, however, after having such an experience, have been able to remain in that state permanently. Not one person I have directly encountered seems to have done that. A number have a very good intellectual understanding of that state, but none seem to have freed themselves fully from unconscious motivations.

In fact, the unconscious is one of the primary problems with those who believe they have "arrived." Since one's unconscious is, by definition, unconscious, we do not

know what it is causing us to do. But if we observe others, we can see that it is continually injecting itself into their lives. And, if we will observe ourselves carefully, we will begin to discern how it is causing us to act in ways we do not see, convincing us we know more than we know, using the ego to rationalize its actions.

For instance, a common example involves preachers who rail against sin but are later caught committing the very sins they condemned. Some are intentionally manipulating others for power or money when they preach, knowing they are insincere and just don't care. But many are sincere in their sermons. Their "good" self is preaching to their unconscious, trying to convince themselves to be good, trying to convince those bubbling torrents in themselves that are not fully conscious to obey the conscious rules they have adopted. Most sense that the unconscious currents are there, but are not yet willing to fully acknowledge them. Thus, they are sincere when they preach; they just do not know their own shadows.

Numerous examples can be found in every spiritual tradition. In fact, there has been a wave of scandals in recent years in the Roman Catholic church, as well as among Buddhist teachers and Indian swamis. Many did not claim to be enlightened, but some did. A famous teacher in India, Sai Baba, did many miraculous things and had millions of followers. But he was accused in his later years by a number of followers of acting out of his sexual urges—to their detriment. And Chögyam Trungpa, one of the best-known Tibetan Buddhist teachers who came to the U.S. in the 20th century, had great insight, but his life story does not suggest he had mastered himself. Although the idea of "crazy wisdom" is sometimes given as an explanation for such actions, in most cases this seems like a rationalization by the teachers, or by their followers.

There are countless examples, but the crucial point is that many teachers and preachers have had powerful realizations, even performed amazing feats, but that does not mean they are fully liberated or one with the Divine. Further, just because you believe you are enlightened does not make it so. Having such a belief is a thought in the mind, but to be truly free you must purify the heart, as well as deal with the unconscious—and that takes a long time and much struggle. Most of the teachers I have found worthwhile have taught this. In fact, all the Christian mystics have said it, almost every Hindu teacher I have read, most all the Buddhists I have studied, and so many others such as Rumi, Gurdjieff, Emerson, and Thoreau. The Zen tradition developed a whole system to make clear to students who thought they were enlightened just how far they still had to go. In fact, Zen is built around an understanding that a person cannot decide for themselves if they are fully awakened,

because it is so easy to fool oneself—to mistake a *kensho* moment (an encounter with the mystery) for full awakening.

The importance of structure and guidance

To guard against this danger, through the centuries most traditions had formal structures for those who seriously wanted to travel to the higher reaches of the mountain of realization. Christian monasteries and convents had very strict rules for entry and required obedience to spiritual guides. Most Sufi traditions have said that a teacher is absolutely necessary, and most Zen lineages have required that every aspirant have a teacher to guide them through the levels of awakening. In many Zen schools, each level of advancement has to be confirmed by a teacher. The resistance to such structures in the modern world is a problem, for we have been trained to resist authority, and our culture of narcissism encourages us to think we are more advanced than we are. To a great extent, however, people cannot judge whether they are firmly established at a high level of the journey without someone who knows them aiding in that determination, for it is very easy to fool ourselves.

After noting the problems with self-evaluation and the dangers of striving, however, it is important to recognize a paradox—a person must aspire to the highest levels if they are ever going to climb the mountain. The issue was captured well by the Sufi teacher Abu Yazid al-Bistami: "This thing we talk of can never be found by seeking, yet only seekers find it."[1] So the role of a guide or teacher is to help us understand where we are on the path, as well as nudge us in the direction of the higher levels when we are ready. To accomplish these aims, a guide has to know both the trail and the traveler well enough to discern what the next step should be.

Another reason a guide or teacher has been considered crucial in many of the wisdom traditions is to adapt the program to the student. Each person is different and each stands on a different part of the trail—at the present moment some are crossing a stream, some scaling a steep rock wall, others passing through a grassy meadow, and still others are lost in the desert. In the many different situations we face on the journey the approach needed varies tremendously. Sometimes we need to apply greater will, sometimes surrender is the only way forward. Sometimes perseverance with a difficult practice is called for, sometimes a change of pace, a different direction. On this journey, what each person needs to hear or do or understand at any given moment varies greatly, especially at the higher levels, which makes a standardized program problematic, and sometimes even harmful. Thus, a teacher or guide is often necessary to avoid these pitfalls and help us along on the way.

This does not mean that it is impossible to awaken on one's own, but it is very rare and very difficult. And subject to the great danger of self-delusion. That is why there are many stories in the traditions about how difficult the path is. For instance, there are stories over many centuries of aspirants wishing to be admitted to practice in a Zen monastery who were required to make dramatic demonstrations of determination and commitment before training could even begin. I have heard in various Buddhist traditions a version of this saying: "Buddhism is a long and difficult path that finally leads to instant awakening."

It is not surprising, then, that all the branches of Buddhism have stories of the struggles and pain experienced by those on the path—one of the most dramatic being the ordeal of Milarepa. He was instructed by his teacher to carry out tasks that involved almost unimaginable hardship over a long period of time. Often, he wanted to quit, sometimes decided he would quit, but each time he overcame his doubts and made a fresh commitment to continue the struggle. Then, after many years of trials and tribulations, he finally received his master's blessing and the culminating lessons. Yet even then he did not feel he was completely established in the highest realm, so he spent several more years living in a remote cave, eating little, undergoing severe deprivations—until he felt he had mastered, not only the teachings, but himself. Like so many other great exemplars, it was only after these many years, incredible hardships, and much effort that he finally achieved what he sought.

Another incredible story is that of Bodhidharma, who is usually credited with bringing Buddhism to China: It is said that he sat in a cave and faced a wall for nine years, not speaking for the entire time. Of course, it is hard to separate fact from legend in these stories, but a documented account of a successful journey in more modern times is that of the founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba. Aikido is a martial art that has deep Buddhist roots, and the story of its founder is a vivid example of what is required to gain ultimate realization, as well as the fruits that can be attained.

A very good book by a teacher living today who was considered enlightened by many of his followers but knew he was not is: *In Love with the World* by Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche. In describing his journey, Yongey Mingyur recounts a multi-year pilgrimage that takes him through all kinds of harrowing experiences, to the point of death, until he has a breakthrough that reveals the incompleteness of his previous understandings.

My guess is that if you told Milarepa, St. Teresa, Bodhidharma, John of the Cross, Yongey Mingyur, Thomas Merton, or Morihei Ueshiba that people today were claiming they had become instantly awakened, they would laugh out loud—or perhaps smile inwardly with compassion. (There are many good books about the trials and

victories of seekers in every wisdom tradition. At the end of the **Ultimate Journey** series I will list a number of these books.)

All the Wisdom Traditions Say the Same Thing

In every wisdom tradition there are stories of those who reached the ultimate state: union with the Divine; permanent awakening; loving God completely with heart and soul and mind. For the few who reach this ultimate destination, whatever the words used to describe it, the journey is over. They are dwelling in the place for which all spiritual seekers long.

But the number of those arriving at this destination is small. Much more frequent are reports of those who had a powerful experience, felt everything has been realized—followed some time later by new questions and fresh doubts. Having read hundreds of accounts of peoples' journeys, including those of seekers in modern times, this conclusion stands out: All who reached the final destination had a long and difficult road.

In the Christian tradition there are several credible accounts of those who seem to have made it to the ultimate state. As in Buddhism, however, most who were considered fully realized left their homes and families and dedicated themselves to a spiritual life. Most were monks or nuns in monasteries, not an easy life through the centuries. The medieval Christian mystic and teacher Meister Eckhart might well have made it to final fulfillment; James Finley's excellent talk entitled "Meister Eckhart's Living Wisdom: Indestructible Joy and the Path of Letting Go" suggests this to be the case. But his journey was long and hard.[2]

Teresa of Avila seems to have made the complete journey, but like Milarepa she had years and years of intense striving and profound suffering before she could dwell in the Seventh Mansion she describes—a state that brings perfect peace and tranquility. In that place, she could say about the difficulties other people were inflicting on her that she could face them with an "equal tranquility of mind, without losing the peace and quiet of her soul."[3] Going even further:

> Not only did this not distress me, but it made me so unexpectedly happy that I could not control myself. … I had no desire that they should do anything else than what they were doing, and my joy was so great that I did not know how to conceal it.[4]

There is a good chance that, in the modern era, Peace Pilgrim made it to that place, but she had to give up her ego life completely and endure the most difficult of circumstances year after year in order to stay there. Her description of that journey,

combining Transcendentalism with Christian and Jewish thought, is very moving. (*Peace Pilgrim: Her Life and Work*)

Another powerful book is Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism*, in which there are dozens of accounts of the painful struggles undergone by Christian saints **after** they had experienced a deep connection to God. In fact, Underhill makes it clear that it is only **after** one is deeply connected to God that it is possible to enter the "dark night of the soul" as understood by John of the Cross, who coined the term.

In modern times, a moving example of the difficulties of the journey can be seen in the life of Mother Teresa. Her letters to her confessors are filled with the anguish and doubts she often experienced during the forty years after the powerful mystical experience that sent her on her famous journey, and which made her one of the most iconic figures of the 20th century. (*Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light*.)

A marvelous account of the Christian journey—using Dante Alighieri's imagery of going through hell, purgatory, and heaven—is *Dark Wood to White Rose* by Helen Luke, a Jungian analyst. Dante makes extraordinarily clear how difficult the journey can be, and Luke provides a compelling symbolic understanding of that journey. Interestingly, the modern Tibetan Buddhist teacher Yongey Mingyur, mentioned previously, conveys succinctly the same message Dante gave us 500 years ago: "Happiness comes down to choosing between the discomfort of becoming aware of your mental afflictions and the discomfort of being ruled by them." If you do not become aware of what is in your unconscious—all the things you have repressed—they will rule you, and you will never be able to reach the final possibility life offers.

Jesus and the Journey

There is also the complicated issue of Jesus himself. In our world today, perhaps a billion people believe that Jesus thought he was God from his earliest years, that he was an enlightened being from day one and lived a perfect life. There are similar stories about the Buddha, and Krishna, and a few others from around the world. The fact that many believe that these individuals were born enlightened, however, does not make it so. My sense would be that Jesus spent his "lost" years, all those before his 30th year, working toward wisdom and at-one-ment with the Father. There is some evidence he was a student of John the Baptist: Why else would he go to John to be baptized, or wait until John was arrested and prevented from teaching before Jesus himself began teaching? Or perhaps Jesus was a member of the Essene community, learning much there. Some say he studied in India. I don't have a clear sense of what his path was, but no one else does either. It can only be guesswork, for we have no definitive information.

The only accounts we have don't tell us what he was doing during all those formative years. That in itself is a real mystery, making intriguing questions inevitable. Adding to the mystery is the passage in the *Gospel of Luke* which tells us that, after his time in the desert, Jesus came back to his hometown of Nazareth, went to the synagogue on the Sabbath, and began instructing the people there. Their response does not suggest he had lived a life that made them think he was one with God before that time, for it is written:

> All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff.[5]

It doesn't sound like Jesus had lived, up until the age of 30, as if he thought he was God, and it doesn't seem that the people he grew up with and lived among thought that he was. My best guess is that Jesus did a great deal of inner spiritual work until that age, and then had a profound breakthrough after John was arrested and Jesus went off alone into the desert for 40 days. When he came back, he was transformed. Was he fully enlightened? Who can say? But he had clearly experienced something profound and he began teaching. Did he feel complete and total union with the Father at that time? I don't know, but the night before his crucifixion, after a long night of prayer, he said, "Not my will, but Thine be done."[6]

This suggests that until that moment he still had an ego, a personal wish and will, and it was only at that precise moment that he fully and completely surrendered himself to the cross, sacrificed his worldly self to the mission he felt called to fulfill. It was at that moment that he left his ego identity behind completely and became one with the Father in spirit and deed. Insofar as this is the case, it means that he had to endure great suffering and accept crucifixion before he could reach the ultimate union. This fits with the insight given by Teresa of Avila who said that, from those God expects much, much is required. But to emphasize again: The exemplars who have stayed true to their calling report that ultimate fulfillment does come, and it is worth all that was asked of them.

Every Tradition Has Stories of the Struggle

The struggles and difficulties are documented in every wisdom tradition. Ancient Greece was formed and guided by stories of the trials given to those on the path. Just to recount some of the names—Odysseus, Prometheus, Persephone, Theseus, Perseus, Psyche, Oedipus, Hercules, Sisyphus, all associated with stories of long and hard journeys—gives a sense of the difficulty as seen in Greek culture, which in turn had a formative impact on the modern world. Through the centuries the stories from

Greece and then Rome became more about real human beings than the Gods, but the theme was continuous: The trials that had to be endured to make one's way to fulfillment.

Many such stories of real human beings in the Greek and Roman world come down to us—including the trial and death of Socrates, the magnificent journal of the emperor Marcus Aurelius and his struggles to live a good life, the accounts of the difficulties of initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries, and Cicero's account of his journey in the Roman world. All do not reach the ultimate destination, but some do, such as Socrates. By the end of his life, Socrates seems to have been living in perfect freedom, doing exactly what he felt called to do, even if many in his culture did not like it. When he was threatened with imprisonment and even death, he was calm, at peace, and even used his trial as a way to teach the lessons he felt were his mission. When he could have escaped or pleaded for his life, instead he chose to challenge his accusers and the jury to themselves live from a deeper truth rather than the shallow currents most of them had embraced. He was sentenced to death as a result, but he then used his death as a way to make his message even more powerful, and was completely serene as the hemlock took his mortal life.

The Hebrew Bible is of course filled with stories of spiritual journeys, most involving trials and sacrifice: Moses' forty years in exile, Abraham's many challenges, Job's incredible suffering, and the struggles of Jacob, David, Ruth, and all the prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Come to think of it, there are no easy journeys in the Hebrew Bible.

In Hinduism there are countless stories of the struggles of saints and sannyasins through the centuries, moving from myth (the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*) to history, with many tales of the difficult journeys of spiritual seekers over thousands of years. In modern times there is the stirring account given by Gopi Krishna concerning his years-long struggle after his first powerful samadhi, and there is the multi-year journey of Yogananda in his famous *Autobiography of a Yogi*. In our own time, Ram Dass has spoken eloquently and with great insight about his 55-year journey after his first awakening, its trials and tribulations, and the reason for and necessity of suffering. There are many, many others.

The Taoist tradition also has numerous stories about the trials and struggles undergone by those who wished to reach the ultimate destination, and their journeys always consumed many years. A relatively modern account is given in *The Wandering Taoist* by Ming-Dao Deng.

I have not said much about Islam because I know less about it, but a modern account of the torturous Sufi path is given by the British teacher Irina Tweedie in *Chasm of Fire*, in which she documents a years-long journey filled with grief and despair—but which brings her to a final breakthrough and into a deep sense of knowing.

The poetry of Rumi, however, represents for me the essence of the Sufi path, including the inevitable struggles as well as the breakthrough into the ultimate. Rumi's poetry is filled with images of the long inner battle with the *naïfs* (our ego ambitions as well as our unconscious urges and desires). Rumi makes clear that struggling with the *naïfs* is necessary, and it is difficult.

> Pain comes from seeing
> how arrogant you've been, and pain
> brings you out of that conceit.
> The words of the prophets and saints are midwives
> to help, but first you must feel pain.
>
> To be without pain is to use the first person wrongly.
> "I" am this, "I" am that.
> "I" am God like al-Hallaj,
> who waited till that was true to say it.
>
> "I" at the wrong time brings a curse.
> "I" at the right time gives a blessing.
> If a rooster crows early, when it's still dark,
> he must have his head cut off.[7]

Rumi said over and over that pain was necessary, and one of the greatest of dangers was when a person on the path began to think he or she was one with the Divine before it was the truth. Al-Hallaj, one of Rumi's role models, said he was one with God, but Rumi tells us that al-Hallaj only made the statement after he had realized the truth of it fully within himself. He was, therefore, free, and thus not attached to his worldly form, even when he was, like Jesus, executed. In another poem Rumi said the path requires that you:

> Stretch your arms and take hold the cloth of your clothes
> with both hands. The cure for pain is in the pain.
> Good and bad are mixed. If you don't have both,
> you don't belong with us.[8]

The journey always brings pain, along with moments of joy and bliss. You must fully embrace both. If you try to deny the importance of suffering the pain, you will fail in your search. In another poem Rumi says:

> The human shape is a ghost
> Made of distraction and pain
> Sometimes pure light, sometimes cruel,
> Trying wildly to open,
> This image tightly held within itself.[9]

But Rumi made the whole journey, so he gives us the solution to the difficulties, saying that if you keep doing your work, you will gradually open, and true progress will result:

> Your doctor must have a broken leg to doctor.
> Your defects are the ways that glory gets manifested.
> Whoever sees clearly what's diseased in himself
> Begins to gallop on the way.[10]

And, if you will just keep at it, the flower of fulfillment will blossom:

> All disappointments spring from your hunting for satisfactions.
> If only you could stop,/—all imaginable joys
> Would be rolled like pearls to your feet.[11]

Why the Pain?

Having detailed the suffering of many great beings does not mean I recommend suffering, nor that have I chosen it intentionally for myself. I suspect, however, that the only way to complete fulfillment is to be willing to consciously go through whatever amount of suffering you are given in your particular journey. The suffering each person is called to accept will, of course, be different in both degree and kind. It is also quite likely that being willing to accept that which you are given will lessen your suffering, for resistance to accepting your path is the cause of much of the suffering you experience.

In the end, whatever amount of resistance you put up, however many barricades you build to save yourself from the path that calls you, only your willingness to accept that path and walk it bravely and honestly will free you from the power of the ego and from being controlled by your unconscious urges. The pain you feel comes from the ego resisting giving up control, from refusing to accept that it will never get everything it wants. Plus, the pain is caused by temper tantrums of the unconscious, because those buried urges and desires are not being fulfilled in the way

they want. Thus, the fact that it is difficult to open into union or freedom is the reason the wisdom traditions put aspirants through difficult ordeals—not because they wanted to see students suffer but because the ordeals are methods developed over centuries to help people break free from the control of the ego and unconscious drives.

It is in this context that the Buddha said that human life is suffering, and the reason his major message was about how to escape from suffering. What he had concluded is that trying to fulfill one's ego and unconscious drives will never bring fulfillment or true happiness, yet giving those up always brings suffering. Thus, either way there will be suffering. The only choice you actually have is to choose the useful kind of suffering, using it to move toward fulfillment, or resist what you have been given and suffer even more.

Of course, the word the Buddha used, *dukkha,* probably meant something like "unsatisfactoriness." So, his message is that life as most humans know it is unsatisfactory, and always will be. Our ego and unconscious drives will never be sufficiently satisfied, for they are endless. The only way to complete fulfillment, equanimity, peace, and bliss is through letting go of what we think we want—although this will bring one kind of dukkha, unsatisfactoriness. But following the path he recommends, true fulfillment might actually await. To arrive at that place, the Buddha taught abandonment of life in the world and living with a total disregard for personal pain and pleasure. And, hard as it is to hear, he did not suggest the path would be easier for others than what he, himself, had to endure. Jesus accepted the torment of his final days and then crucifixion and said, "take up your cross and follow me."[12] All the saints and sages discussed above endured great trials. Yet, in the end, true fulfillment did come.

The Journey Today

This does not mean we should actively seek suffering. I do not think most of us are called to undergo as much suffering as that consciously undertaken by Jesus, or Buddha, or Rumi. But all of us will have to endure difficulties, and most of us will have suffering. Our choice is whether to choose the suffering that leads toward higher possibilities or keep on suffering without any meaning in it. For most of us, normal life will present sufficient difficulties and the suffering necessary for us to do the work we need to do. All that is necessary is to undertake the difficulties, even the suffering we have been given, as our task, as the way to move toward greater consciousness, toward the Good, toward light and love.

Although a lot of the examples given here are from past centuries, these currents are very much alive today. Many of our popular movies and novels pull us

into them because they are modern versions of the ancient call to fulfill our lives through taking on great challenges, sometimes risking everything, for a higher end, to serve what is right and good. From movies as diverse as *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Star Wars,* and *The Matrix*, to blockbuster novels like *The Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter, Ready Player One, The Chronicles of Narnia, Dune*, Nora Roberts trilogies like *The Guardians*, and even the superhero movies such as *Wonder Woman* and the *Avengers* —we are surrounded by stories involving individuals who chose the light over the dark, love instead of selfishness, and accepted challenges in service of the Good. The journeys in these stories are never easy, that is why they speak to us—because somewhere inside we know that only through accepting challenges will we ever reach the full potential life has to offer. In the final analysis, all these stories stir some deep knowing in us that there is a Good worth fighting for.

Still, most of us do not have lives like those of the saints and sages, nor the heroes and heroines of movies and novels. If your life up to this point, however, does not seem that dramatic, do not despair. Most of us are simply called to live our human lives as honestly as we can, choosing growth and love and the good as often as we can. If we will do that, it is likely that a significant number of us will have a breakthrough as we near death. As Stephen Levine, who worked with the dying for many years said about a lot of the people in their last moments:

[They] went through a considerable change, a seeming opening beyond all the unfinished business and fear and holding that led up to that moment. For some this 'knowing' seemed to happen days or sometimes weeks in advance of death. At some time, perhaps just a split second before life leaves the body, the perfection of this process is deeply understood ... even those who have held most tightly encounter the perfection and fearlessness of the moment of death.[13]

Kathleen Dowling Singh, the author of the very fine book, *The Grace in Dying*, and who has worked with hundreds of people close to death, says there is a sequence of "increasingly higher or deeper levels of consciousness, each more enveloping than the next, through which each of us passes"[14] as we approach death. This seems to be the natural way we complete our experience in the human body, she says.

In the book she gives an example of one woman whose "dying held everyone around her in rapt attention. She kept drifting in her consciousness, radiant and relaxed, to return to us periodically with eyes wide open and streaming with light. Each time, she repeated in a whisper, 'I cannot tell you how beautiful this is.'"[15]

Both life and death are a mystery. Although we cannot know for sure, it seems likely that the amount of work we do to become more conscious, to align with the

Good, to choose love rather than self-centeredness, to come into harmony with the largest picture of existence we can envision, will go a long way in determining how far we will be able to open into fulfillment as death approaches.

[1] Stephen Mitchell, ed., *The Enlightened Mind: An Anthology of Sacred Prose* (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991), 76.

[2] James Finley, *Meister Eckhart's Living Wisdom: Indestructible Joy and the Path of Letting Go*, (Louisville, Colorado: Sounds True, July 1, 2014), audio book.

[3] John J. Burke, ed., *St. Teresa of Jesus of the Order of Our Lady of Carmel: Embracing the Life, Relations, Maxims and Foundations Written by the Saint* (New York, New York: The Columbus Press, 1911), 339.

[4] Teresa of Avila, *The Complete Works of Teresa of Avila*, vol. 3 (New York, New York: Burns and Oates Publishing Company, 2002), 147.

[5] Luke: 28-29 (New International version of the *Bible*).

[6] Luke: 22:42 (King James version of the *Bible*).

[7] Coleman Barks, trans., *The Soul of Rumi: A New Collection of Ecstatic Poems* (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001), 22.

[8] Kabir Helminski, ed., *The Rumi Collection: An Anthology of Translations of Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi* (Boulder, Colorada: Shambhala Publications, 1998), 6.

[9] Helminski, ed., *The Rumi Collection*, 2.

[10] Coleman Barks, trans., *The Essential Rumi* (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 141.

[11] Andrew Harvey, *The Way of Passion: The Celebration of Rumi* (New York, New York: Penguin Putnam, 1994), 309.

[12] Matthew 16:24 (New International version of the *Bible*).

[13] Kathleen Dowling Singh, *The Grace in Dying: A Message of Hope, Comfort and Spiritual Transformation* (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998), 12.

[14] Singh, *The Grace in Dying*, 7.

[15] Ibid, 100.