

SOUL BUILDING

Soul under construction



ERIC LE RESTE

A spiritual journey often begins just by looking for some relief to the angst of living. But often we find that what we learn is completely life-changing. We realise that a serious renovation, renewal, is needed, because we get an insight into how human beings should really be – beautiful, gentle, noble, generous hearted, appreciating the beauty of life and expressing that.

Human beings are made up of body and soul. We begin to understand that the soul is a living energy of different frequencies, or vibrations and the soul can be in its highest form of vibrating energy or in its lowest form of vibration. So, how do we change from low to high? We begin the massive re-construction of the soul.

The soul has been deeply damaged, through the passage of time. The soul goes through profound experiences, lifetime after lifetime, and has passed through many storms of negative and destructive energy that can undermine the foundations of the soul. Imagine the effects of just one relationship of discord and unhappiness. All the sorrow and pain of that leaves a scar, that we try to carry on living with, try to ignore, but it is not possible. The scar remains, and it is very easily re-opened when any further hurts occur. Imagine that multiplied through many lifetimes.

The wounds that the soul has suffered have come from things like anger, greed, and selfish and destructive desires. However, we have a deep memory of our original beautiful state of being. When we understand that it is possible to renovate the soul, there is a desire to do so and then we need to surround the 'building site' with signs, to let people know what is happening. We initially need to create a safe space around us; a group of friends, or a meditation centre, as we begin the work.



Understanding spiritual knowledge, and meditation, to polish the wisdom we have gained, are the foundation of renovating the soul.

THERE ARE THREE STAGES IN THIS RECONSTRUCTION

1. The foundation
2. The main structure
3. The finishing touches

The foundation is the most

important thing. It is going to be hidden and no one will see it, but if the foundation is weak, the whole construction is going to fall. The foundation is the strength of understand-

ing, combined with experiences. Very often these two elements are not in balance. Either we have great understanding of the self, but no experience, or we have many beautiful expe-

periences without very deep understanding. In Rajyoga, these two elements are understanding the knowledge, and experiences of meditation. These two are the foundation of the whole

construction. We go deeply into understanding what I am, who I am, what happened to me, what needs to be fixed. Because, just like in a building, there needs to be engineering knowledge of all kinds, in the same way, we need to learn and explore very different kinds of knowledge of the soul to build a good foundation. We keep on learning as we go along but it has to be matched with experience, otherwise it is all in the head, like building castles in the air. The experience, the meditation, is like polishing the wisdom we gain through knowledge. Spiritual reconstruction requires constant attention until the soul is complete.

In the meantime, we work on the main structure. This concerns a very long list of virtues and powers. All the qualities of the soul, which are happiness, love, respect, self-esteem, and more. These virtues alone will not be enough. These qualities, values and virtues of the soul take a lot of energy and time to cultivate, and they need to become powerful. For example, you can say you have peace, but you need the power of

peace. The structure has to be strong and needs power to be injected in the virtues.

The finishing touches then, is what my personality eventually becomes, which is my unique way of expressing the virtues and powers, filled with the understanding and experiences. Making a virtue personal, is expressing the virtue in my own unique way. For example, pure love is the raw material, but how am I going to use and express it? I have the power to love, but how will I do that? There are a million possibilities. Just as in a new 20-apartment building, all the apartments are exactly the same but as soon as people move in, they become 20 different planets. Why? Because of the unique personality of each one. There will never be two identical souls. The decoration of the soul is very different for each one. Each one can reconstruct their perfect, unique, beautiful, and luminous self.

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SPIRITUAL AVIATION

THE WINGS THAT HELP US FLY



B.K. USHA

For millennia, humans have dreamed of flying. First kites, then balloons, gliders, and finally powered aircraft helped us realise this dream. But physical flight is not the only kind of flying. One can fly high mentally as well, when one is full of zeal and enthusiasm. Being able to fly from one corner of the world to another may be a marvel of science, but one can be down in the dumps even while sitting in a plane thousands of feet up in the air. Being in a flying state of mind, however, works wonders. Zeal and enthusiasm are the

wings that help us fly high, with our feet firmly on the ground. No matter what kind of task we are doing, when there is enthusiasm, it seems easy and is accomplished without difficulty. These two qualities bring energy, lightness, and positivity, all of which boost interpersonal relationships, teamwork, and our personal sense of well-being.

All of us have these two wings, but we sometimes get tired while flying. A circumstance, or person, feels like an obstacle, and while we are sometimes able to overcome it with love, at other times we come down. Doubt, fear, attachment, or any of the other vices brings us down from our elevated state of mind, and instead of flying we get caught in a variety of issues.

Just as enthusiasm uplifts us, the vices weigh us down with unnecessary or negative thoughts. What seemed easy and enjoyable earlier begins to feel tedious, and we make ex-



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cuses for not doing what needs to be done.

Things on the ground appear tiny when seen from an aircraft flying above, and similarly the issues that drag us down seem insignificant when

the quality of our thoughts is high, but they become magnified when we are feeling low. Just as someone who is ailing and weak finds it difficult to lift even a glass of water, whereas those who are strong can eas-

ily lift even two buckets, we start seeing small things as big.

To always fly high, it is important to keep the mind strong and happy, and the intellect clear of wasteful thinking. The best way to do that is

to have a positive attitude and regularly exercise the mind by practising meditation. When we turn our attention inward and examine our thoughts and feelings, we begin to recognise where they are coming from. Gradually we gain greater control over our thinking. To raise the quality of our thoughts and be able to 'fly', we can then connect to a source of power from where we can draw the peace, love, and strength that give us the 'lift' to take off and fly. The best source of such power is the Almighty. Remembering Him, with His qualities of mercy, benevolence, and selfless love fills us with the same so that we start becoming a little like Him. Gradually we find that we are also living 'up there', though not quite as high as Him, but with an elevated vision and attitude that makes us more peaceful, kind, and generous.

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A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Sunflowers are 'heliotropic' or sun-seeking. They turn their large faces throughout the day to continually face the sun. When I commit to a life lived in the light, I commit to drawing only the energy that nourishes the soul. I choose to turn my attention away from darkness, not as denial, but like a sunflower, to stay in the light of positive influences. Today let me be like a sunflower and face the Light.

SELF-RESPECT

DO NOT LET THE FALLOUT LAND IN THE HEART



ARUNA LADVA

"Self-respect is not a matter of what you are doing in your life, but rather of how you are doing it. This requires that you bring quality and virtue into each action, whatever that action maybe." -- Dadi Janki

When negative things happen to us, we often get so consumed and overpowered by those events or people that in that moment, it be-

comes the only that thing matters; we become oblivious to everything else in our life, even the positive that is happening around us. It takes a while before we realize to what extent we had given so much power to that thing or person. And even then, it is not so easy to turn the dial back to zero and find our balance.

So, 'don't let it land'. When I get affected mentally or emotionally, it means I have allowed that thing to 'land' in my life and stick to me. Then it will harass me, until I send it flying off on its way on the next flight. Allowing things to land in my heart or mind means that I have given them far greater weight and importance than my own precious life, or my own self-respect. I have given it more



Allowing things to land in my heart means that I have given them far greater importance than my self-respect.

airtime than it deserves. The thing may be minuscule, but

because I have let myself become emotionally affected

by it, that thought, or idea has become a mountain and

a big issue in my mind. This is when we find that we have lost our true and balanced perspective, and we find we are pulled into some energy vortex of wasteful thinking. We need to be careful because this is how the ego can get the upper hand.

When things 'land', we often get angry. Anger is a way to express our distaste, displeasure, and irritation about the situation. What happened was the trigger for the train of negative thoughts set in motion, but I am the one who is upsetting my own self. It stays in the memory track for a long time because we have given it space in our mind and have mullied it over far longer than necessary. That is why it is difficult to remove the sorrow and pain we have taken,

especially from relationships. That 'landing' made an impact and it festers. If we are able to reflect and see the lessons learnt, we can take benefit and move into our self-respect.

We can choose to stay in our peace and in our power. We can maintain our soul respect. We can change the quality and nature of our thoughts at any time – we only need to choose to do so. For this we need to be aware that 'stuff' has landed and we have to clean up the emotional mess it created. When we shift out of the lower energy vibrations, then we can start to move to the higher frequencies of love, compassion and wisdom. We become proactive, rather than reactive.

For that we need focus and

to pay attention, remain centred and not lose our concentration with the myriad of distractions that are out there in the world. We also have to free ourselves from our own thinking patterns; along with those old recordings from the past playing in our mind; and those worries about the future too.

We have to be alert to anything that may be about to 'land' so that we can avert it. Vigilance is the key. We need to pay attention and not take things personally. Meditation gives power to send things on their way, and not land, so that we can remain free.

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