

A Challenge, A Dare, and A Lot of Fun!

Imagine living in a society based on love, compassion, fun, and constructive creation.

People feel secure because they know that they won't be left alone. People don't hesitate doing what really turns them on because they know that they'll never have to worry about being hungry or homeless. People learn how to create internal happiness, thereby eradicating the need to depend on the ever-changing surrounding circumstances for personal contentment.

Is this simply a dream? It surely is, as of now.

Just like, at one time, believing that we could fly hundreds of people through the skies was a (crazy and unattainable) dream.

Just like, at one time, believing that we could tame the unruly nature of wild animals to become our friendly companions was a dream.

Just like, at one time, having the absurd notion that we could possibly control fire's fiery to be used for our benefit was a dream.

Just like, at one time, believing that the nomadic nature of the first humans could be tempered so that they would settle down to adopt agriculture and, even more ridiculously, be willing to work confined in a regular schedule was inconceivable.

These things were completely unimaginable at one time, as what is being proposed here may be seen as plain fantasy by the majority in today's world. Yet, similar to all of the previously mentioned ludicrous ideas, which have eventually come to pass, this one can as well be established. There is no question of its being possible—IT IS! It's simply a matter of if we have the will to make it come into being.

This book is to help us start putting this will into practice. No doubt, it will be challenging, with many struggles and sufferings along the way, and others will consider us quite off the wall for even considering it possible. Then, just like with any idea whose time has come, we will be seen as beacons of light—co-creators of a playful and spiritually uplifting world, which is ours for the choosing.

Fasten your seat belt and get ready to take off on the most interesting ride of your life!

THE JOURNEY

This esoteric adventure allows you to join in the expedition at any time en route, steeped in the conviction that any fellow traveler seeking ways to understand and live out the ideas presented herein should be made to feel welcomed and accommodated.

The main journey, shaping the heart of the book, consists of a series of daily reflections, each consisting of the following five parts:

1) A nature appreciation photo—Considering that humankind is one part of nature, there are also some photos including human-made structures. (See “About the Pictures” and “Picture Bibliography” for an explanation and full bibliography of the pictures.)

2) A one-liner linking the photograph to the writings

3) Writing(s) related to the soulscapes of the month (A reference for each writing is provided in “References” followed by a full “Bibliography”.)

4) JR (Jambo’s Remarks)—This is a commentary by the author related to the specific writings for the day, and is indicative of the JAMBO vision. (See “About Jambo International Japan/Inc” for an explanation of what JAMBO is and to understand its vision.)

5) PP (Personal Pondering)—This is a question or a suggested simple activity, which pertains to the day’s topic, deliberately presented in a broad and open manner. Some of the important ones are repeated in different ways throughout the book for further reflection.

In short, this book provides a daily journey into the recesses of your own mind. It defines a process of discerning the things that are most important for you and ways to implement them in your life. Furthermore, for the more avid learner, the writing references provide an abundance of resources, which can help you to travel further on the path towards self-discovery and live out a life more in tune with your ideals.

THE 24 SOULSCAPES - WHERE WE'RE GOING

The journey that you are about to embark upon will take you through a diversified mix of 24 conceptual soulscapes. These soulscapes provide the mental and spiritual nourishment to fertilize and develop an integrated balance within your own internal garden, for it to live anew and become a rich source of creation beneficial for all life forms.

The 24 soulscapes (classifications) frequently step on each other's turf and overlap, moving up from 1 to 12 (corresponding to each month, with each group including two soulscapes). The soulscapes basically go through a process of flowing from a more introspective focus to the full implementation of your deepening spirituality into the physical world. Specifically, each month focuses on two soulscapes as follows:

The Self Cultivating Deliberations

January: Education and Reflection (Meditation)
February: Appreciation (Enchantment) and Fun
March: Love and Compassion
April: Non-Violence (Forgiveness) and Sustainability

Spurring the Inner Contemplations Outward

May: Universal Ideals and Unity (Oneness)
June: Purpose and Persistence
July: Dignity and Inclusion
August: Integration and Connection

Getting Real - The Cultivated Spirit Brought into Physical Reality

September: Spirit and Nature
October: Envisioning (New Paradigms) and Faith (Hope)
November: Action and Leadership (Proactivity)
December: Empowerment and Creating

The first page for each month explains the importance of the two soulscapes grouped for that month. The second page consists of a drawing that relates to the two concepts of the month. This is followed by one page per day of the month with picture and reflections. The page number indicates the month (number) and date. For example, the page for August 18 is 8-18.

You can expect the journey to be thought-provoking and jolting at times, as it forces you to question your inherent beliefs and the way forward. You may find this disconcerting in some ways, and absolutely delightful in others, but I assure you that it is a trip which promises to bring you great benefit both spiritually and practically.

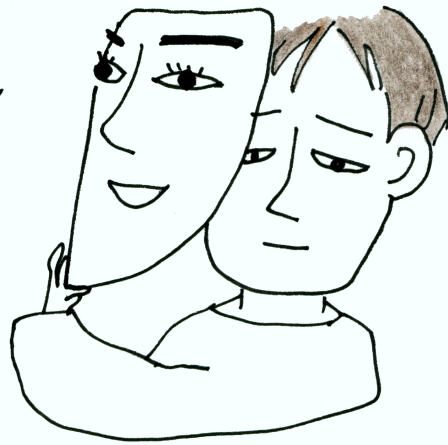
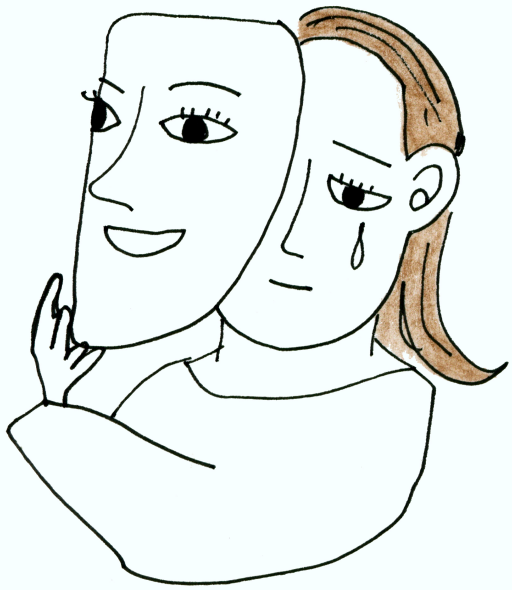
JANUARY

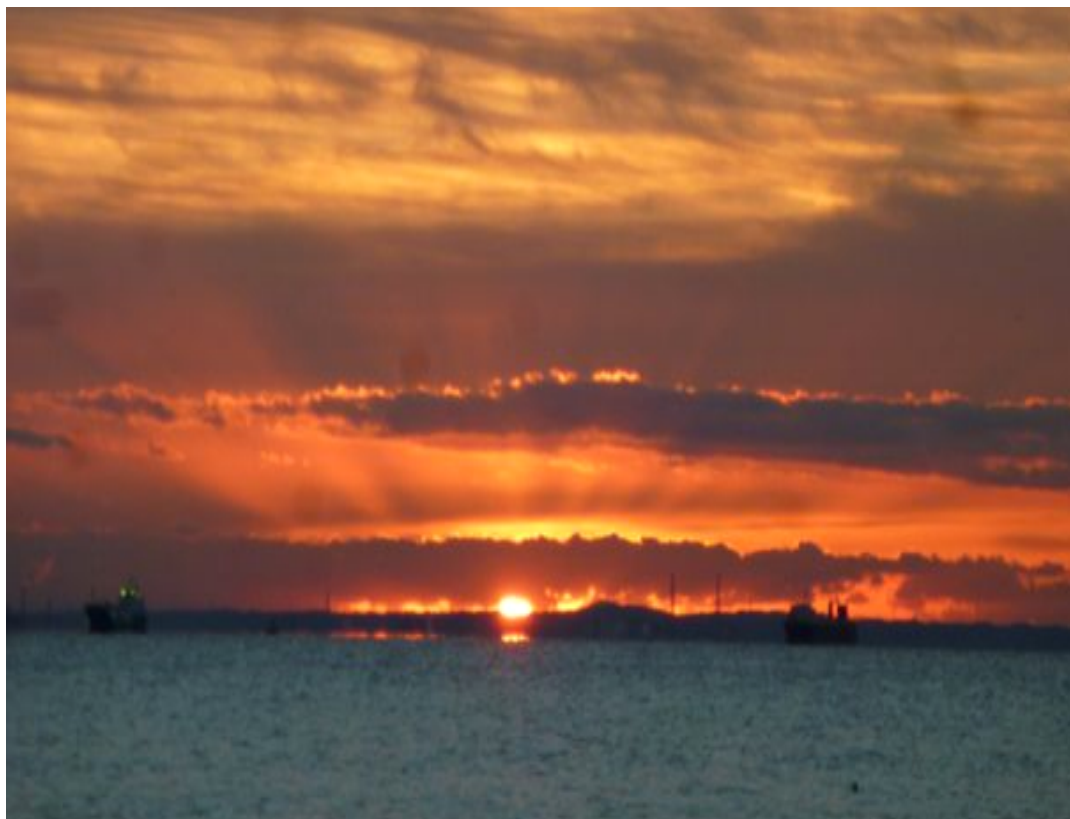
Reflection & Education

Your journey begins with an intensive search within. It is only through better understanding of and by yourself that you can clearly see what is working for you and what isn't. A key point here is to observe yourself non-judgmentally. How do you live your life? What do you believe deep down in your heart? Is your moral philosophy reflected in the way you live? If not, perhaps you truly don't believe it. You need to keep the judgments out since neither self-condemnation nor putting yourself on a pedestal will do anything to make you see the life path clearly and, in turn, make the changes that reflect THE REAL YOU. It is good to remember that the only thing you consistently have the power to change is yourself and it is in so doing that you can affect a change in the people around you.

This kind of self-reflection is the beginning of the most significant education of your life. In coming to know yourself (understanding how your past has brought you to this point and what is beneficial for you to keep and what is best to discard), you can subsequently move towards what you wish to learn outside of yourself—specifically, the things which actually peak your interest and excite you to learn. When education becomes enjoyable, you naturally wish to continue with it progressively.

In the process of “re-educating” yourself, you come to question the truth of a meaningful education for the society at large, particularly for the youth in our schools. What kind of learning would be emphasized in order to result in a society you long to move towards? Why wait until people are adults in order to self-reflect, to generate the awareness necessary to be who they really want to be? And how best to provide education for children, which instills within them these spiritual values that can be implemented to develop a more enlightened and fun-filled society—one that fills the real world with great hope?





The darkness fades as the light returns.

Do you want to change the world? How about beginning with yourself? How about being transformed yourself first? But how do you achieve that? Through observation. Through understanding. With no interference or judgment on your part. Because what you judge you cannot understand. No judgment, no commentary, no attitude: one simply observes, one studies, one watches without the desire to change what is. Because if you desire to change what is into what you think should be, you no longer understand.

The day you attain a posture like that, you will experience a miracle. You will change—effortlessly, correctly. Change will happen, you will not have to bring it about. As the life of awareness settles on your darkness, whatever is evil will disappear. Whatever is good will be fostered. You will have to experience that for yourself.

But this calls for a disciplined mind. When there's something within you that moves in the right direction, it creates things within you that move in the right direction, it creates its own discipline. The moment you get bitten by the bug of awareness. Oh, it's so delightful.

JR: The key to beginning self-observation is to initiate without judgment—something that is very difficult to achieve since we've all learned the difference of "good and bad." Once judgments figure into the picture, you can no longer objectively perceive what is happening because your pre-conceived image is distorted. As much as possible, clear out these distractions and simply observe.

PP: Think of what has brought you to this point in life. Contemplate what is working well for you and what isn't.