

# *Bali My Love*

**A Journey of Peace**

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*Sprinkled Holy Water*

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There are three symbolical messages that make this e-book is published:

1. Exactly one year, one month, one day after terrorist attacked the twin tower of New York on September 9 2001, Bali was also attacked on October 10 2002. The touching thing then, there was no sign that the Balinese pay anger with anger.
2. Few years after the bombing, Bali suffered a lot. But with all limitations, Bali was recovered and was awarded by many international medias as the best island in the world as tourist destination.
3. More than just awarded internationally, a US lady later did a spiritual journey worldwide. As has been widely

published through book and movie titled “Eat, Pray, Love”, the nice food was found in Italy, beautiful prayer was heard in India, and the touching love was rediscovered in Bali. For that reason, the title of this e-book is “Bali My Love”.



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# *A Humble Introduction*

Similar to duality of day-night, both have their own purpose. Daytime is for laboring and praying while nighttime is for resting. Losing one of them means loosing both

## *A Humble Introduction*

James Redfields notion in *The Celestine Prophecy* about the non existence of coincidence is indeed a truth, and that kind of cosmic message was also the one guided my childhood in an old Village, North Bali, Indonesia. The idea (the non-existence of coincidence) encouraged my quest to reveal meanings within most of lifes details.

Whenever a tree comes into vision I contemplate that the tree is not only beautiful because of its green, but because it grows toward the light in gratitude. Gazing at a wide ocean generating comprehension that an ocean is not gentle merely by its blue, but also because it accepts anything comes without any resistance. Sunrise is not only warm but also inspires about life that supposed to progress from darkness to light. Smiling to the full moon is perhaps an awkward thing for

common children, but I did it many times. It was later during the days of adulthood that I understand how full moon is an actually symbol of enlightenment. The case is about the same with star gazing. I was convinced that they are more than planets ornamenting the sky for I often heard that they symbolize the bright lights of the enlightened.

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Someone who has pacified and purified the obstructing force of ego-fixation enjoys the elixir of Vajrayana teachings

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That was my childhood in Tajun village. Calm, peaceful, silence, enlightening. When I begun knowing how to read, I thought that the peacefulness of Bali is merely a result of tourism industrys effort in making it more marketable. Evidently, Balinese elders have plenty of teachings about peace they are trying to bequeath to the next generations. In a more comprehensible universal language, the teachings can be summarized as the following:

The ground: Rwa Bhineda (the all encompassing purity)

The path: Bhakti Yoga (the path of love and devotion)

The fruition: Parama Shanti (the ultimate peace)

## Rwa Bhineda

Without any intention to judge different approaches are wrong, Balinese elders comprehend God in a quite unique way. While in many places God is positioned as the direct opponent of the devil, in Bali God and evil are not a pair of battling dichotomy. *Dewa ya kala ya* (the presence of both the divine and the evil aspects), is how Balinese elders explain the basic substance of humankind. In a more profound way, the

No need to worry about understanding, no need to discriminate right - wrong, no need to determine the direction of the journey. The significant matter is to do everything with devotion

philosophy of Rwa Bhineda synthesizes all dualities into one perfect unity. Similar to the duality of day and night. Day exists because of the presence of the night, and both have their own purpose. Daytime is for laboring and praying while nighttime is for resting. Losing one of them means loosing both.

This is perhaps the one that makes Balinese custom in the matter of offering is a bit unique. Whereas in many

places offerings are served only for heavenly beings, Balinese elders provide foods to the inhabitants of all the low realms. This means an obvious admittance that saintliness is not the opposite of wickedness. The dwellers of the heavenly realms are not the enemies of those belong to the underworld. In Tantric language this is termed as the all encompassing purity.

With this kind of starting point, a wanderer may undertake a boundless, buoyant, and bright spiritual journey, particularly because it is not burdened with arguments and quarrels (devil God, mara - Buddha, unholy - holy, wrong - right, fail - success, rebuke - praise, etc.). In Tantric language, all are Buddhas. For the Sufis, all are Gods. Heed the message of Tulku Urygen Rinpoche in Vajra Speech: Someone who has pacified and purified the obstructing force of ego-fixation enjoys the elixir of Vajrayana teachings.

## **Bhakti Yoga**

With the foundation of the all encompassing purity, Balinese elders teach to do everything (praying, working, dancing, crafting, maintaining household) with the spirit of devotion (bhakti). Therefore some fellows in the West translate Bhakti Yoga as the path of love and devotion.

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Happiness is the journey, in the spirit of love and devotion, the  
journey itself is also the destination

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There is no need to worry about understanding in the initial steps, no need to discriminate right - wrong, and there is also no need to determine the direction of the journey. The significant matter is to do everything with devotion.

Therefore, if the Balinese people are asked about the meaning of their offerings, more than half will admit that they do not know. Even so, still they perform it with an amazing spirit of devotion.

There are numerous sequences of rituals in Bali. There are a lot of ceremonies related to humans' life since the birth until the death of a person. There are also great numbers of rituals related to the buta, ancestors, gods, until the unimaginable beings, all are so many. However, there is one thing impossible to be bargained in all of them that is to conduct the ritual with the spirit of devotion.

Perhaps that is the reason why there are so many Balinese find happiness by performing rituals. Borrowing the opinion of many writers, happiness is the journey. There are certainly result, output, and destination, yet, in the spirit of love and devotion, the journey itself is also the destination.

## **Parama Shanti**

As how will be discussed more elaborately in the following contemplations, there are many activities (ceremonies, speaking, praying, greeting) performed by Balinese people in order to gain peacefulness.

A ceremony is concluded with Parama Shanti (the ultimate

peace) by pronouncing the word shanti three times before the participants leave the site. A ritual is arranged so that it is started with emptiness (as a symbol of the ultimate peace) and also concluded with emptiness. The end of every conversation is also marked by uttering the word shanti three times.

This manner presents a vivid inspiration that, whatever happens in life, whatever conducted in life, always maintain a peaceful heart in performing all activities. Perhaps that is why Balinese elders refer to God as Hyang Embang (The Ultimate Silence), and celebrate every coming of the new year with Nyepi (the silence day) when people stop doing most of worldly routines (speaking, working, praying, etc.). While the absolute aspect of Embang is silence, since emptiness provides space to all to grow, then the relative aspect is compassion.

## A Triggering Conclusion

With this kind of objects to be contemplated, actually Balinese elders bequeath abundant spiritual legacies. One among the heritages worth to be deeply comprehended is that Balinese people ritual (Panca Sembah) is started with emptiness and also concluded with emptiness. This certainly presents a clear illustration that everything starts from emptiness and ended

A ritual is arranged so that it is started with emptiness (as a symbol of the ultimate peace) and also concluded with emptiness

with emptiness. And it is definitely not an emptiness which is without meaning. Since the path taken is Bhakti Yoga, thus emptiness here is the one which is embraced with compassion. In the perspective of a Tantra master, it is that: the true shunyata is karuna (the true emptiness is compassion).



2

*The Touching Light of Bali*

Bali has provided a torch about how humanity affairs/  
problems/ conflicts should be solved

## *The Touching Light of Bali*

On October 12th 2002, for the first time a bomb was exploded in Kuta, Bali, with hundreds of victims. Sad, grief, touched, and concerned are suitable words expressing the feelings of many souls at that moment. As if commanded by an unknown force, a lot of parties from Indonesia and abroad responded to the incident as indication of sympathy and empathy. Funds, efforts, medicines and news were streaming vastly.

However, there was something even more touching. Kuta citizens those were stricken by the uncertainty of their future, put upon a trial of patience, those whose birthplace and hometown was devastated by the bombing and stained with human blood, surprisingly carried out a touching response.

We have witnessed countless pages in the book of time where

anger was counteracted with anger, blood compensated with blood, hatred followed by hatred, and destruction accompanied with nothing than another destruction. Hence, is a moment where human blood responded by calmness, destruction brings friendship instead of animosity, suspicion to other party replaced with empathies to share, not a rare one in humanity? In addition, there was no single place of worship been violated, moreover been destroyed.

It is even more exceptional for, whereas the suspect was Al Qaeda and the incident was happened in a place where majorities are non-Moslems, the particular episode astoundingly established a Hajj Bambang as one of the messengers in conveying Kuta citizens deepest feelings. It was

Is a moment where human blood responded by calmness, destruction brings friendship instead of animosity, suspicion to other party replaced with empathies to share, not a rare one in humanity?

not only that the fact reported in the media, numerous humanity acknowledgements were as well awarded to Hajj Bambang.

Together with Nyoman Bagiana Karang and other Kuta citizens, Hajj Bambang took action immediately. From transporting human remains, carrying the bleeding ones on their back, saving those who might be saved, to calming their publics emotion. As the result,

though it has been years since the incident and the court has determined the guilty ones together with their sentence, there

is no change in the expression of Kuta. Hatred is not always has to be followed by hatred, destruction does not always has to be accompanied by grudge, human blood does not always has to be compensated by human blood, and Hajj Bambang is still an honored and respected citizen of Kuta.

## **God in the Heart**

For whoever owns sensitivity and lets this event to make a dwelling in his/her heart, this occurrence might open doors of contemplation. Most people are very devoted and deeply in love to God that they greet in Mosque, Church, Monastery, Konco, and Pura. Our Moslem friends do their prayer five times a day, our Christian fellows have countless adoring songs for God, our Buddhist acquaintances even prostrate to Buddha statue, and our Hindu comrades have hundreds and even thousands rituals to worship God in Pura.

The question then is: if the devotion to God in places of worship could be that sincere, is there anyone who conducts similar devotion to the God within ones husband/wife, parents, children, neighbor, superior/inferior, government, other human beings, animals, plants, and other God manifestations?

Many religions agree that God is everywhere. In Buddhist language, all possess Buddha nature. All of us might be proud

with the great amount of donation to build a house of worship, the high intensity of praying in ones site of worshipping, still the question whispers: Is human devotion to the God they find on shrine more important than God who is immanent in all beings?

Quoting the Dalai Lama's opinion, God is infinite compassion. In this understanding then Hajj Bambang, Nyoman Bagiana Karang, together with their associates in Bali restoration, have found God (read: the boundless compassion) and become living proofs that love is the one may perfectly exorcise hatred, blood spilled by war and fight, anger, and grudge. This is the touching Light of Bali.

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As a comparison, the September 11th 2001 terrorists attack on the World Trade Center New York has been followed by aggressive act upon Afghanistan and Iraq. How many bullets that have been shot, bombs that have been dropped, military aircrafts that have been let loose, warships and tanks that roamed behind grudge and revenge. However, as has been recorded by history, there is not a single indication that the terrorist will stop spreading death and tragedy, as well as there

is no clue that U.S. and its allies are satisfied with their grudge and attacks. In particular, human beings fear on the imminent/latent terrorist attack is not subsided.

Bali is not a superpower country; it is only a small island. Bali is frequently accused of pawning culture for tourism. Nevertheless, both of the 12th October 2002 incident and the second bombing in Bali were monuments of life that Bali has provided a torch about how humanity affairs/ problems/ conflicts should be solved.

Moreover, it has escorted Hajj Bambang, Nyoman Bagiana Karang and their associates before God. Therefore, upon an issue of what name should be given to the monument of Bali bombing, a friend suggested it to be “Torch of Humanity”. The light is simple, whoever fills his/her life with compassion shall gain happiness. Whoever fills his/her life with anger, sadness shall he/she obtains.

Hajj Bambang was not only saved from the bombing, he was even acknowledged with a number of international awards. More than being regarded as a successful leader of the Institution of the Management of Kuta Citizens, Nyoman Bagiana Karang is a member of local legislative. We also know that the terrorists caught were given death penalty by the court, as well as we recognize the troubles of U.S. government and its allies.

From all of these stories, Bali bombing indeed took priceless sacrifices. Isn't it a great waste if such event then merely flies by the time and vanishes? Is there any fellow touched to comprehend that the Bali way of resolution is as well the manner of reconciliation for humanity?



3

*Bali's Sorrow, Our Sorrow*

Sorrow often makes us sensitive. Above all, it forces us to profoundly realize that all beings are interconnected in this web called life

## *Bali's Sorrow, Our Sorrow*

The account of the terrorist bombs is a story of sorrow. It is also the same with the bombing in Bali. Hundreds of life were devastated. Even though Australian citizens are the greatest number among victims, but in the chill of death it is no longer relevant to talk about nationality. It is more significant to discuss about the human's sufferings.

Everybody wants to be happy, but some people daily life cause wounds and sufferings. The September 11 2001 attack on the World Trade Center twin buildings was indeed a darkness. And it tried to be solved by another darkness by the United States and its allies' invasion to Afghanistan and Iraq. So there went the second bombing in Bali, terrorist bomb in Turkey, suicide bombing in Iraq, the kidnapping of Korean citizens in Afghanistan, the blasting of an airport in London, in the year Of 2012 the city of Boston US again was attacked by terrorist bomb.

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In a place where hatred is not confronted by hatred, anger is not followed by anger, there hatred, anger, and grudge will be transformed into greatness

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Based on this reflection, civilization is chasing around from one darkness of hatred to other darkness of anger. In this case, Bali is sharing the light of understanding. Maybe the opinion of some peace activists is right, Bali is the world's heritage of peacefulness.

## **The Light of Greatness**

It was in Bali that the hatred of terrorist bomb (even though it happened two times) was not followed by more terrible malice. Hatred, anger, and bitterness were responded by hands those were holding and shaking each other. Hajj Bambang with his friends and Nyoman Bagiana Karang with his associates in Kuta, Bali, were not touched by the darkness of grudge, anger, and hatred. They walked radiantly enlighten a lot of sufferings.

Years after the tragedy, Hajj Bambang has received numerous national and international awards. Nyoman Bagiana Karang has become a member of the Indonesian parliament. Bali successively acknowledged as the best island for tourist

destination in the world from a number of prestigious international medias. This is as if sharing lights of understanding that, in a place where hatred is not confronted by hatred, anger is not followed by anger, there hatred, anger, and grudge will be transformed into greatness. Perhaps that is why the highest mountain in Bali is the Agung (Great) mountain.

And through this manner of responding, not only Bali is painting the beauties of peacefulness, but also

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Islam through the exemplary of Hajj Bambang and his friends. The heart-touching Islamic role-models were not exist only in the Middle East, but in Bali as well. Without asking about religion, Hajj Bambang and his friends forgot about grudge, anger, hatred, and the fear of death in the grip of terror, to walk hand in hand alleviated a lot of sufferings. With this drama, it is as if Bali intended to revive the beautiful expression of Islam: rahmatan lil-alamin (be a blessing to the world).

## **Suffering is Purifying**

As have been told in many stories of humanity, sorrow is double-faced: devastating and purifying. It is devastating when a person responds to bitterness and irritation with even darker spirit. In this case, sorrow is similar to a rolling ball of snow

which is made bigger and bigger by the hays it rolled upon.

Sorrow purifies a being who has completely realized that there is guidance for life within sufferings. Quoting the experience of the Sufis, since the message of life exists even in the falling of a leave to the Earth, moreover in the suffering that devastates hundreds of life. If we focus on the guidance in every happening then suffering can guide us to the light. Let alone in the brightness, the light also shines in the darkness. This light is also the one guided Kuta in its time of sorrow.

In Eastern wisdom, sorrow is a moment to pay back our debts to life, parents, teachers, past time mistakes. Those who refuse fail to do the refund also create new obligation. Whoever

If we focus on the guidance in every happening then suffering can guide us to the light

flows with the sorrow is compensating the debt gratefully and then be free.

And fortunate are those who are made holy by suffering. Mostly

because the journey passing myriad of sorrows grants them a boundless capacity to suffer. They are as grand as the ocean, which does not get affected by anything thrown into it. The greatness of life is unimaginable if death can be greeted in this manner.

## Suffering is Connecting

Happiness is indeed a charm. However, it does not teach anything. Suffering is full of tears, yet there are so many humans made more perfect by suffering. Jalalludin Rumi shines because the sorrow of losing both his teacher and his manuscripts. Kahlil Gibran born and grew up in misery. Arjuna found enlightenment in deep grief. Pema Chodron entered the gate of enlightenment after her haven of loyalty toward her husband was trembled down by divorce.

Sorrow often makes us sensitive and it also encourages us to join hands. Above all, it forces us to profoundly realize that all beings are interconnected in this web called life. Whatever done in this web (good-bad, holy-unholy, right-wrong) will return to the doer.

Therefore, it is not an exaggeration if we conclude that the sorrow of Bali is ours as well. Does a rose not composed by non flower elements (soil, water, sun light) as well? Does in the terrorist cruelty not lie a mesh of millennial old hatred? Does Bali's sorrow not reminding humanity that it is only by love we can be happy? Apparently, suffering opens the window of love.

Only a few seekers taking the journey into their own selves (through fasting, meditation, dzikir, contemplation, yoga, etc.)

wish to experience the taste of sorrow. Yet sorrow still comes like a guest visiting a mansion of life. Sometimes through disaster, death, misfortune, or failure. Nevertheless, whoever has been illuminated by the understanding that suffering opens the window of love knows that suffering is also a kind of light that guides the journey.



4

*Songs of the Soul*

All spiritual awakening is preceded by the dark nights of the soul. And the main sign in the dark night of the soul is suffering

## *Songs of the Soul*

A young Balinese deeply touched the hearts when asking: “what happens with the Balinese?”. On the island itself there are some people who are no longer feel at home (in some cases, even after became a corpse one was still harmed). Outside Bali - remember the story of Balinuraga village in Lampung Indonesia in 2012 and early 2013 touching events in Sumbawa Indonesia - Balinese was pursued, expelled, some fled to the forest out of fear, and some even died because of others attack. With tears drop, the young man asked, where then the Balinese should take shelter?

### **Suffering is Softening**

Religious historian Karen Armstrong researched the human search for God for four thousand years, and wrote up the results in the book titled History of the God. In the first

golden age - in which the human heart is still clean crisp - a holy person conversing directly with God. Abraham and Moses, Arjune in Hinduism are all in direct dialogue with God. But in this age (axial age) all saints are softened by suffering.

Suffering - in the hands of a diligent, sincere disciples - is beautifully transformed into an awakening path

Mahatma Gandhi was shot, Jesus Christ was crucified, Martin Luther King Jr. was

shot, Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years, His Holiness the Dalai Lama lost Tibet when he was still a teenager, Thich Nhat Hanh been expelled from Vietnam. That's why, when Prince Siddhartha firstly went out of the palace, the secret teacher gave the first and the most important lesson: "*dukkha*" (suffering). So back to the story of sadness that has engulfed many Balinese, suffering is not a punishment from God, nor the temptation of Satan, but sandpaper that softening the heart. As was taught by many realized Teachers of the past, all spiritual awakening is preceded by the dark nights of the soul. And the main sign in the dark night of the soul is suffering.

Similar to lifting heavy weights at the gym, the muscles of the body will be stronger and healthier. Similar thing happen to mental muscles. Suffering that is experienced by sincere and diligent heart strengthens mental muscles later. A meditation student once asked the relationship between the depth of

meditation and karma. In the story of a lot of people who are diligent on the path of meditation, meditation made bad karma come when we are ready. At a deeper level, even when one committed a lot of murder ( for example Angulimala, one of the direct disciple of Lord Buddha), deep meditation that is combined with the blessing of Guru made Angulimala just was stoned. In the deepest level (for example the most admired yogi of Tibet Jetsun Milarepa), deep meditation practice that met Guru's blessings made even mistakes of killing many people could be purified. More than purified, the enlightened Milarepa attained great spiritual realization. Through these stories look bright, suffering - in the hands of a diligent, sincere disciples - is beautifully transformed into an awakening path. This happens because meditation make mind wider and wider. Till one day, when one attained enlightenment mind can be as wide as space. This space like mind could accommodate all kind of karma. As a result of it, karma has no effect at all. This is what many deep meditation practitioners called as “boundless capacity to suffer”. In the context of suffering, suffering helps much in widening the mind. Especially because suffering - when it is experienced as opportunity to repay karmic debt - increase one’s capacity to be more tolerance. Above all, suffering makes one misses deep spirituality and blessing of the Guru as well. In the stories of great people like Mother

In the stories of great people, suffering is more than just softening, suffering made the enlightened heart even blossoming

Teresa , Nelson Mandela and HH Dalai Lama, suffering is more than just softening, suffering made the enlightened heart even blossoming.

## Well-Nourished Soul

In the soul that has been well-nourished by suffering, then life shows a different face. Working as an example, for the soul is

When done in the spirit of happiness, work is one of the best kind of devotion

undernourished (full of complain, protest, never satisfied) life is a series of dull compulsion. In the experience of some people work even made them sick and diseased. For the well-nourished soul (who is sincere, diligent, full of gratitude), work is the immanent God which is being transformed into immanent God. Farmers cultivate and process land (God) into fruits (God).

Merchants distribute fruits (God) to consumers (God). When done in the spirit of happiness - because happiness is the best form of worship - work is one of the best kind of devotion.

In the deep cultivation of meditation like this, one is able to listen a beautiful message like this: "Similar to flower, the language of the enlightened so touching, because language is the fragrance of soul". The language of enlightened beings is so touching (smooth, polite, lovely) because language is a fragrance that is sprinkled from the depths of soul.

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Similar to flower, the language of the enlightened so touching, because language is the fragrance of soul

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Balinese elders was also cautiously in using language. Especially because language of media, leaders, parents (their role model, their body language, the word choice, conformance with the place and time), co-create life. So when there was a teenager in Bali who is so concerned with the sadness of Balinese and then became angry, the inner teacher whispering: "hold the opinion loosely". Particularly because the most dangerous seed of violence is not derived from religious and racial differences, but because a person is being gripped by his/her own opinion. Thus loosening grip of opinion is an important task in this day and age. The suggestion, no matter what job someone is done just be a compassionate witness. Like a message in guided meditation: "thoughts and feelings may appear and disappear in any form, right-wrong, happy-sad, good-bad, the task of meditation is only one witness, witness, witness". Once one is able to loose themselves from the grip of opinion, then it is possible to give a gift of understanding to others.

Understand that the bad guys do not stand alone. There are parents who are still growing, there are schools that have not been arranged well, there are leaders who are stingy of

providing role models, there are media reports of violence and hostility, there are tempting advertisements and other toxic environment, all of which makes them so darkening. In the depth of understanding is visible, most bad guys are the "victim", not an actor. There is no bad guy who intended himself to be evil. For example, in an in-depth studies of the fundamentalists in many countries shows, fundamentalists assumed that they would be attacked. This is the result of the environment which is too competitive. Deeply learn from this finding, being angry to the attackers only justify their assumption that they will actually be attacked. As a result, then life would end up like fire extinguished by dry grass.

The most important lesson that emerged from here, understanding, compassion, friendship is what heals both the attacker and the attacked. With

Under the light of the heart suffering is nothing just a soul singing of returning back home

understanding, compassion, friendship we come to nourish the soul of society as well. Together in the end we sing the soul songs. Answering the touching questions on the very beginning of this paper about the soul shelter, through this way people are sheltering in the light that lies within the heart. As realized by many awakened masters of the past, under the light of the heart suffering is nothing just a soul singing of returning back home.

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Understanding, compassion, friendship is what heals both  
the attacker and the attacked

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5

*Moon of Peace from Bali*

## *Moon of Peace from Bali*

In many occasions, His Holiness the Dalai Lama mentioned that regardless of the religion, race, or ideology, there is one likeness among us: wish for happiness, denial for suffering. Most people pray, work, and maintain household, in order to be happy and to avoid suffering. Perhaps this is why all works related to happiness are highly demanded by public.

In Bali, it is the same. Long time before meditation centers become a trend in the West, Balinese elders have been teaching about happiness and peacefulness. Balinese people pronounce the word shanti (peace) three times before leaving a shrine, and conclude a conversation in the same manner. Many elders also write the word shanti before his/her name in the bottom of a letter. This is similar to the word love in English.

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Through attacks, derision, and insults, our mind is being  
tempered into a shining diamond

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## Life is Peace

In the past when television and other electronics were not yet present, the most popular entertainment in Bali was the drama gong. The plays performed were various, but in most plays there was an appearance of a character named raja buduh (crazy king) that brings the stories into tension. In the end of the plays, through the power of goodness and wisdom, the kings madness was cured.

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If you are unable yet to radiate compassion to those who insult you, it means that your mind is not completely purified yet

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In different setting, in every cycle of the time, there is always someone who takes the role as crazy king. No matter how strong the government, how firm the police officers, how severe the judge, how clean the courts, crazy king is always present. As is leaving a message to all of us that there is no life cycle filled only by righteousness, honesty, and wisdom.

There was Rahwana in Shri Rama's time, Duryodana in the age of Shri Krishna, Devadatta in time of Lord Buddha. Jesus was tempted by Judas, The Prophet Mohammed was disturbed by Quraish tribe. His Holiness Dalai Lama made shining by Chinese governments cruelty. All of those inspire that

whenever life gives birth to holiness, it will be followed by the born of unholiness. In all stories it is shown that evil does not exist in order to destroy holiness, but to make it more shining instead.

In the language of an acknowledged Dharma master, Atisha Dipankara, the best spiritual teacher in the one who attacks your hidden fault. This can be understood, particularly because through attacks, derision, and insults, our mind is being tempered into a shining diamond. But this can only happen if we keep silence, stay away from resentment, and even radiate loving-kindness. A master once said that, if you are unable yet to radiate compassion to those who insult you, it means that your mind is not completely purified yet.

In this kind of spiritual attainment, peacefulness is not merely a temporary visitor in life for peacefulness is the life itself. Balinese elders provide signs through a great number of spiritual legacies: Rwa Bhinedha, Nyegara-Gunung, Bhur Bwah Swah, Nyepi day, and Hyang Embang. The point is that dualities (right - wrong, good - bad, holy - unholy, etc.) exist not as warring parties, but as one unity that enlivens one another. Those who embodied this in daily life will not spare even a single darkness of anger and hatred in his/her life. This is Parama Shanti (the ultimate peace).

Look inside when being insulted and abused. If there are still anger and annoyance it means that the mind is still contaminated

## Giving is Healing

Tibetan people own a lot of rituals, and so do Balinese. Ceremonies are certainly not merely about material offerings. There are outer offerings in the form of physical objects, inner offering in the form of service, and innermost secret offering. In the language of the elders: benefiting others, having a kind heart, that is the supreme offering. Do anything for other beings, possess a clean, clear, and helpful heart, and then personally experience the opening of the secret gate.

Perhaps that is why offerings in Bali are not dedicated only for heavenly beings but also for our fellows in the underworld

Dualities exist not as warring parties, but as one unity that enlivens one another

(inhabitants of hell, hungry spirits, etc.). This inspires that good deeds are not only worth for good people but also for those who hurt.

Speaking frankly, the cursing and intimidating people actually play vital roles in the spiritual path. First, they very effectively help indicating the true quality of the mind. Look inside when being insulted and abused. If there are still anger and annoyance it means that the mind is still contaminated.

Secondly, the abusers and intimidators are actually so very kind that they are even willing to go to hell in order to make us

patient and wise. Perhaps that is why Balinese elders hand down the tradition of segehan. It is a treat for our friends in the underworld (hell, hungry spirits, animals).

Pay heed to one of the elders messages: mebakti, mebakti, mebakti. Give, give, and give, without arguing. One day an adept will understand that actually there are no giver, receiver, and the process of giving. That is the true peacefulness (Parama Shanti).

In the West there was once a research on the subject of healing. And in one corner of the findings it was found out that people with someone/something they love at home (child, pet, tree) have less stress and live longer. This lets us know that giving is healing! Those who often give will one day understand that giving is not only healing but also liberating. Therefore it is easy to be understood if some Tantric masters swore to their teachers (samaya) to pay all evils with kindness. Because, by this way, a person is not only being liberated but also eliminating obstacles along the journey (karmic obscuration).

Actually there are no giver,  
receiver, and the process of giving.  
That is the true peacefulness



6  
*Nothing But Peace*

Patience is the key into calmness and the one enables human  
to accept life without wailing. Finally, life flows  
innocently as it is

## *Nothing But Peace*

In many issues, the West gives clues of the direction of the civilization. A lot of things happened in the West before they plagued the entire world, such as industrialization and democracy. One prominent sign taking place in the West for a half century is the severe necessity for peace, indicated among others by the abundant numbers of books suggesting peace in their title such as one of Thich Nhat Hanhs works entitled Peace is A Step, Thomas Mertons Thought in Solitude, and the most beautiful work of Eckhart Tolle which is Stillness Speaks. All are discussing about the wonderful peace and silence.

Bali also frequently identified with peace and silence. This is not merely a result of tourism promotion, for it is also related to the Balinese elders spiritual legacy. Observing the way the elders conclude a conversation (especially in formal

circumstance), one will distinguish the pronouncing of Om, Shanti, Shanti, Shanti. Om is a sacred word. It represents many things, those are all symbolizing holiness and peacefulness. The word shanti (peace) is even pronounced three times, as if inspiring that the purpose of the discourse (spoken, written, prayer) is to invite peace and tranquility into the heart.

All beings want to be peaceful and serene. Pay attention to the names parents give to their child those are all beautiful. Never will a Hindu name his/her child Rahwana or Duryodana. No Buddhist is given the name Devadatta (Gautama Buddhas cousin that many times attempted to kill him out of envy). This means that in the aspiration level all people desire peacefulness. In Bali traditional villages, people still have the names like Wayan Sabar, Nengah Tenang, Nyoman Terima, and Ketut Polos. As if delivering a message that anyone wants

The purpose of the discourse (spoken, written, prayer) is to invite peace and tranquility into the heart.

to be peaceful should not forget to be patient. Patience is the key into calmness and the one enables human to accept life without wailing. Finally, life flows innocently as it is.

## All Climb to the Same Peak

Among many religious days in Bali, Tumpek Landep is a sign. In common language, Tumpek Landep is a day to consecrate sharp objects like keris. A point of view deserves to be respected. From another perspective, sharpness is similar to the summit of a mountain which can be climbed both from the left and the right side. This reminds to the story of two mountain climbers making their journey from different directions; one from the east while the other is from the west. From the summit, the teacher asked the direction of the sun rise. The one climbing on the eastern side answered that it is from the back, while the one from the west replied that it is from the front. And loud was the argument between the two.

Front-back, back-front... Meanwhile, the master silently smiles and prays on the summit. When both climbers arrived at the summit, they understood and were embarrassed for their blaming each-other.

Speaking frankly. The story of the two climbers is the story of most people. In Bali no one dares to claim him/herself

Not all of the so called evil people conclude their life terribly. In the stories of Walmiki and Milarepa, wickedness was merely an opening door to repentance, followed by the using of the remorse as an energy to practice in order to experience high level realization

walking the left path; in a case of misfortune one could get his/her house burned down by such statement. Most people will declare that they are walking on the right path, and busy judging people they hate with the left predicate.

And the story clearly illustrates that not all people traveling on the left-hand path end up in hell. Walmiki in Hinduism is a

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Criticizing the left path disciples overly is not the characteristic of right path people who have found wisdom

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beautiful story. After spending a lot of times robbing and killing, one day he was happened to rob the house of a holy sage. The wise requested Walmiki to go home and asked whether his families were willing to compensate his sin. And eventually they werent. Thus Walmiki prostrated in the feet of the saintly figure, and then meditated until his sins were redeemed. After some times, his body was covered by ants thus one among the meanings of Walmiki is nest of ants. At that point, a new horizon of Walmikis life was revealed so he was then able to write the holy story of Ramayana.

Jetsun Milarepa in Tantra experienced the similar thing. After his father passed away, all of his inheritances were confiscated by his uncle and aunt thus her mother was consumed by grudge. When Milarepa grew older, his mother sent him to learn witchcraft in order to take revenge. After accomplishing his training, Milarepa sent evil energy to his uncle and aunts house. As the result, a festive wedding party was turned into a

bloody incident by the crumbling of the house. Tens of people died.

Grave remorse made Milarepa swore to compensate his evils. And he did. In the hands of his master he experienced years of literally bloody training. In the end, Milarepa experienced advanced spiritual realization. Many times people saw him fly to the sky. When he was old, there was a gathering on the summit of a mountain and it was impossible for him to go up there. However, the power of his prayer made the mountain bowed before him. When he passed away, lights were emerging from every directions. In the lineage of Tantra masters, Milarepa is recorded as one of the most prominent masters after Tilopa, Naropa, and Marpa.

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This is the true emptiness, the true silence. The state of mind  
which is perfectly clean and clear, unshakeable  
by any rebuke and intimidation

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The point of this story is certainly not to practice black magic, but a sequence of inspirations that not all of the so called evil people conclude their life terribly. In the stories of Walmiki and Milarepa, wickedness was merely an opening door to repentance, followed by the using of the remorse as an energy to practice in order to experience high level realization. This is also a contemplation material for those who like to judge, so

they are not easily stain their self with rebuke and revilement.

In the language of the sages, all are growing. Walmiki and Milarepa started on the left path. Even though experienced insults and intimidations, in the end they attained the advanced realization. Most of the holy persons indeed take the right path: stop doing bad things, do more kindness, and purify the mind. Mahatma Gandhi and His Vivekananda in Hinduism, His Holiness Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh in Buddhism, Jalalludin Rumi and Kabir Sahib in Islam, and Thomas Merton and Santo Fransiscus in Christianity were only some examples of holy persons walked the right path. But criticizing the left path disciples overly is not the characteristic of right path people who have found wisdom.

In the paths of Tantra, it is termed as Rigpa (nothing positive to attach, nothing negative to reject). No pleasure that bonds and leaves suffering, no sadness that makes the adept suffer. It is a state of mind which is free and liberated

In Tajun village, Northern Bali, there is a tradition that every oldest son is addressed as kolok (mute). Pay a careful attention to the word kolok. It reads the same both from left to right and from the opposite way. As if giving a message that left and right will end at the same place. Perhaps that is the cause why in the last days of his life, Ida Danghyang Dwijendra wrote a beautiful work entitled Dharma Shunya. Dharma does

not exist only in the hilarity of words but also in the depth of the silence.

## From Silence to Silence

Every Balinese who frequently prays in Pura knows the elders teaching to do panca sembah (paying homage five times). The unique thing is, it is started and finished empty-handed (sembah puyung). Nevertheless, the perfect emptiness is something nearly impossible to be described by words. In a friend's message, constructing emptiness is a mistake. However, no matter how a mistake it is, a lot of masters have to do so for words are the communication means for most people. And especially because the teaching has to go full circle.

There is a story about a wise man who lived on the edge of a forest. His daily life was filled with only silence, smile, and prayers so all villagers respected and loved him. One day, a girl in the village was found pregnant, and people did not know who should be responsible. In the midst of intense public anger, the frightened girl put the blame on the old man. Spontaneously people got mad and brought the girl to the man. They cursed, abused, called him a hypocrite, and then left the girl to live with him. The wise man simply said: Okay.

Flow with karma, because there lies hidden the secret of the beauty of life. Balinese elders open the gate through Rwa Binedha

A few years after the child was born, the young mother was depressed with deep feeling of guilt. She went to her parents crying and admitted: It was not the wise man. I am really touched by his kindness in all these years. He never disturbed me for even once.

All things are greeted in silence, smile, and prayer for the happiness of all beings. In Balinese elders word this is called Embang (the perfect silence), a state might happen when someone has flown perfectly with karma

With the girls confession, the villagers again came to the old man and begged for his forgiveness, to which the man replied with the same Okay! This is the true emptiness, the true silence. The state of mind which is perfectly clean and clear, unshakeable by any rebuke and intimidation.

In the path of Advaita Vedanta, this is called Nirvikalva Samadhi. In simple way, Advaita means the condition without duality (good - bad, holy - unholy). And Nirvikalva Samadhi in meditation term is simplified into the fourth position. Not

the left, the right, and also not the middle, that is Nirvikalva Samadhi.

In the paths of Tantra, it is termed as Rigpa (nothing positive to attach, nothing negative to reject). There is no pleasure that bonds and leaves suffering upon its departure, as well as there is no sadness that makes the adept suffer. It is a state of mind

which is free and liberated.

## **Flow, Silence, Peace**

In one scene of the life of little Rama, the little Sugriwa wailed because he never win a fight against Subali. Taking pity on Sugriwa, when Sugriwa and Subali were exchanging blows Rama shot an arrow to Subalis foot from behind a tree.

Later on, when a holy person was distinguished by a shining golden mark of lotus on the feet, Rama was reincarnated as Shri Krishna. One day while he was sleeping in a forest, a hunter saw the mark on his foot from afar and mistakenly recognized it as an eye of a deer thus he shot it with an arrow. When he realized his mistake, the hunter knelt and begged for forgiveness while Shri Krishna merely smiled seeing how the wheel of karma works.

This is the value of a master with advanced spiritual realization. No advantage that may cause arrogance and no misfortune that might arouse anger. It is as well presenting a beautiful secret: flow with karma, because there lies hidden the secret of the beauty of life. Balinese elders open the gate through Rwa Binedha. Two things those are different and yet the same. Happiness and sadness are different still they are actually the same, and so does with the couple of heaven and hell. For ordinary people, they seem different (happiness is

sought, sadness is banished, heaven is worshipped and hell is condemned) thus they experience turbulences throughout their life. For the Yogis, happiness becomes more profound/meaningful because there is sadness, and heaven is shining because there is the darkness of hell. When there is no happiness to be sought after, there is no sadness to be thrown away. No heaven to be worshipped nor hell to be denounced. By this, Yogis experience the calm and balanced mind. This is also why one among the fruits of meditation is the boundless capacity to suffer. All things are greeted in silence, smile, and prayer for the happiness of all beings. In Balinese elders word this is called Embang (the perfect silence), a state might happen when someone has flown perfectly with karma. It also brings inspiration, this is the Parama Shanti (the ultimate peace).



7  
*Crafting Peace*

Mount and hill are symbols of masculine, while sea or lake are of feminine. When the two are embracing each other intimately, this is not only the origin of creation, but also the cause of beauty

## *Crafting Peace*

Every place has its own spiritual uniqueness. The one in Peru has been narrated in a very fascinating way by James Redfield in *The Celestine Prophecy*. Tibetans is exquisitely discussed by Sogyal Rinpoche in *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*. Japans spiritual heritage was neatly written by Inazo Nitobe in *Bushido, The Soul of Japan*, and Indias has been elaborated by so many writers such as Osho in *India My Love*.

Balinese spirituality has also been written by many. The great poet Rabin Dranath Tagore called Bali as morning of the world, a famous writer called Bali the last paradise. As material of contemplation, in the ceremonial arrangement, *Parama Shanti* is placed at the end of a ceremony, right before devotees prepare to leave the site. There are two possibilities of message here. First, it is the highest point of the ritual

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When all (good-bad, success-failure, holy-unholy) are  
useful and meaningful, tongue is speechless,  
no more left to be questioned

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itself. Second, it is that the spiritual blessing the devotees bring to their worldly life after praying in Pura (temple) is the peace of mind (Shanti).

## God as Peace

There are a lot of ways available for humanity to validate a conclusion. The scientists is by combining logic (rationalism) and historical fact (empirics) while those who are fond of holy scriptures referring to the verses. And all ways must be respected. However, for the lovers of sensitivity, sincerity, and acceptance, the way is by opening their physical eyes, ears, and inner eyes widely in order to receive the message of the inner master.

Anyone often pray in Hindu shrines, especially in Bali, will notice that the mantra most frequently pronounced is the one with Bhur Bwah Swah words. Lower, middle, and upper realms as a unity. Many Padma Sana even illustrate the lower realm with the horrible faces, the middle one as where the fear begins to cease, and for the upper one, it is carved beautifully.

In Bhur Bwah Swah, there is no opposition between God and the devil. Particularly because both are not placed in contradiction but admitted as parts of the same thing

Speaking frankly, this is a chronicle of ultimate peace. By still

respecting different opinions, more than ninety percents of debates in the spiritual matter is confronting God with the devil. God is worshipped and the devil is condemned. Again, this point of view must be respected. But in Bhur Bwah Swah, there is no opposition between God and the devil. Particularly because both are not placed in contradiction but admitted as parts of the same thing.

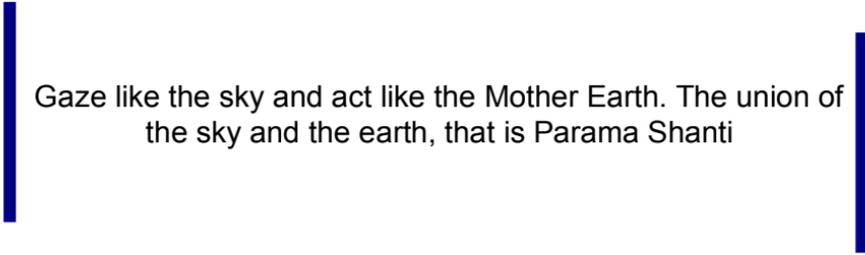
A Catholic priest has an interesting story about God. One day a boy took his mothers candy without any notice. His mother

Whoever deeply understand Bhur Bwah Swah will have peaceful mind, especially because he/she is no longer contradicting God with the devil

was angry and asked him moodily: Didn't you see God when you stole my candy? Calmly the boy answered: I did mommy. The mother got even angrier with such answer. She interrogated: And what did He say to you?

Composedly the child replied: He told me that I may take two. With this answer, his mother was hysterical: You don't know that God will be angry because of your stealing!

It is an inspiring story that God is in the eye of the beholder, depends on the persons state of mind. In the mind of an innocent and sheer person like the boy, God is merciful. In her short-tempered mothers mind, God is full of wrath. And whoever deeply understand Bhur Bwah Swah will have



Gaze like the sky and act like the Mother Earth. The union of  
the sky and the earth, that is Parama Shanti

peaceful mind, especially because he/she is no longer contradicting God with the devil. This is God as peace.

## God as Beauty

In accordance with Bhur Bwah Swah, Balinese elders build religious sites with the concept of Nyegara Gunung (ocean embrace mountain). They construct spiritual structures in the place where mountain or hill is embraced by lake or sea. Pura Luhur Uluwatu, Tanah Lot, Ponjok Batu, Ulun Danu Beratan, Sila Yukti, and Pulaki are merely some evidences in this matter. In Balinese shrine, usually one will be able to witness the rising and setting of the sun which is blended with beauty.

The cycle of life has been complete from the beginning to the end. There are proper place and time for everything

Mount and hill are symbols of masculine, while sea or lake are of feminine. When the two are embracing each other intimately, this is not only the origin of creation, but also the cause of beauty. Either there is any relationship with the previous or not, all of Balinese offerings are also arranged in beautiful manner. Spectators viewing with mortal eyes will see fruits, flowers, and janur (young coconut leaf) lovingly arranged so humanity may perceive the beauty of life. The seers with inner eyes will see a lot of beautiful messages hidden within the lovely offerings.

This is again about ultimate peace. Dualities like good-bad, right-wrong etc. (symbolized by the Nyegara Gunung concept) are present not in order to be confronted, but to be tidily arranged into beauty. Health is beautiful because by a healthiness there are more tasks of life can be done. Sick is also beautiful, because sickness is an opportunity to compensate karmic debts. Wealth is good because there are a lot of positive things might be done with it. Poverty is good as well, particularly because it is the guidance to modesty.

This is Parama Shanti. The state of mind that perceives everything as beauty and good. Once a university student asked the lecturer, if all things are good, what about corruptions and affairs? Smiling gently the lecturer replied: Gaze like the sky and act like the Mother Earth. Parama Shanti

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No coincidence, only guidance, no mistake, only meaning that has not been understood

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happens when humans have insight as high as the sky and act as humble as the Mother Earth. When the sky

teaches that all things are beautiful, Earth demonstrates the existence of a law which is as simple as touching water will get wet and touching fire will get burned. Those who plant banana will get banana while those plant cassava will get cassava. An agent of compassion will receive kindness while a corruptor will receive summons from police station. The union of the sky and the earth, that is Parama Shanti.

## God as Silence

Western model of healing is based on the assumption that life is incomplete. Therefore it provides solution in therapy, operation, and medication by which many things in human system are taken away and a lot of outer substances, like medicine, are injected. And humanity has witnessed what happened recently. Global warming, war, disaster, terrorism, financial ruin, suicides, divorce, and an ex president of the United States of America whose retirement was celebrated by the throwing of a shoe.

Be kind when  
you meet the  
power of  
darkness,  
they're not bad.  
Simply  
understand that  
they're  
uninformed. In  
time, the dark  
forces will also  
find the bright  
light of  
understanding

We are all greatly indebted to the Western culture, together with their science and technology. It is certainly impossible for humanity to be as advanced as in these days without western science and technology. However, in the midst of a quaking civilization, perhaps this is the moment when Easterners should return to their origin.

In Bali, when there is a great difficulty, the elders will give example to return to temple. Discussing about temple it is impossible if not to mention about Besakih. And it is in Besakih where a profound spiritual teaching is inherited. The

center point of Pura Besakih is Pura Penataran Agung. The uppermost part of Pura Penataran Agung quarter is named Kiwa-Tengen, where it is clearly shown that Kiwa (the left hand path, frequently given negative term like black magic) is not positioned lower than Tengen (the right hand path, often regarded as the positive). Both are given the very similar pelinggih (base) with the same luan-teben (height). And between the two, there is nothing.

Parama Shanti is placed at the end of a ceremony. There are two possibilities of message. First, it is the highest point of the ritual itself. Second, it is that the spiritual blessing the devotees bring to their worldly life after praying in Pura (temple) is the peace of mind

Some refer to the empty space in the middle of kiwa-tengen as shunya (silence), some other as sesarining Dharma (the core of the teaching). Balinese elders name this Hyang Embang (The Supreme Silent).

In the light of Kiwa-Tengen, perhaps this is the moment to educate the self that the cycle of life has been complete from the beginning to the end. There are proper place and time for everything. It is only the acceptance that might lead humanity to the wonderful expression of life.

This is the reason why all religions teach their devotees to be grateful. There are God's fingerprints and guidance in every happenings. This is ultimate peace in daily life. There is no

coincidence, only guidance. There is no mistake, only meaning that has not been understood. A master once gave the following message to his student: Be kind when you meet the power of darkness, they're not bad. Simply understand that they're uninformed. In time, the dark forces will also find the bright light of understanding.

Perhaps that is why in Bali we celebrate the coming of the new year by Nyepi day (silent day). When all (good-bad, success-failure, holy-unholy) are useful and meaningful, tongue is speechless. There is no more left to be questioned, moreover to be argued. In this condition, aren't the things left are only the profound silence, calmness, and shanti?



8  
*Peace In Each Step*

Finding health and happiness through smiles and friendships  
is far easier than by anger and hatred

## *Peace In Each Step*

In Bali there is a tale about a boy named Nyoman who was loved by everybody because he was smart, intelligence, and handsome. However, bored with his life, he went to meet a forest wizard who gave him a magic flute that could take him into the future. So it was said that Nyoman started to do experiment with his life.

Firstly, he leaped into his teen. A moment later he got jaded and proceeded to his old age where he saw himself a father with an aging wife. Finding out that old age is even more boring, he went further, and it was at this point that regret struck. There were a lot of present moments that he forgot to enjoy; the amusing childhood, the adolescent full of friendships, the college life full of argumentations. And then Nyoman cry and run to the forest asking the wizard giving him his life back.

To be honest, most people are like Nyoman, rushing to the future. And once get in the future, they lament for there are numerous present times that have become the past without being enjoyed. People are very smart and spartan in preparing for their future, but many of them frequently fail in the matters of enjoying and being grateful. In a complaining friend's language, in the past we could not enjoy delicious food because it was unaffordable and now when we have the money such meal is forbidden for us because of the cholesterol.

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To embrace the present time. It can be done with the present body, age, and wealth. It is learning to embrace all things with smile and friendship

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This nation is the same. Getting bored with the old order, people subverted it and welcomed the new order. However, the new order was also subverted and then substituted with the reformation order. And now there are strong indications that people are getting bored with this one as well.

The human civilization is the same, shifting from one boredom into the other: the first world war, the second world war, the cold war, and now the war against terrorist.

## Life as a Gift

Perhaps because of getting tired with life and its everlasting chase for the future, a lot of meditation masters teach their students to embrace the present time. It does not ask for uncanny and difficult requirements. It can be done with the present body, age, and wealth. It is learning to embrace all things with smile and friendship.

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The past has gone and the future has not come yet. The only moment in time available to be hugged is the present, in order to do so is as simple as to smile and be grateful as we are inhaling and exhaling the air

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It has been proven that finding health and happiness through smiles and friendships is far easier than by anger and hatred. Hence, several writers (like Spencer Johnson in his work *The Present*) conclude that today/this time is the present.

The present husband, wife, child, parents, house, job, and health, are not perfect indeed, but they are waiting to be celebrated. Indonesia as a resident for many people is also flawed. Nevertheless, this country provides a lot of things worth to be rejoiced. The beautiful rising and setting of the sun, a moderate income that can pay more than one house keepers, the temptation of disaster that often proves that Indonesian people are still care and kindhearted.

A friend fantasizes that if we are lost in the outer space, the most beautiful dream will be to step our feet back on this lovely planet Earth. Palestine might be raging with its politics, Middle East and Israel might keep on warring each other, yet there are still plenty of things deserve a toast in this planet.

## Life as Beauty

Someone questioned: if it is so, why it is so difficult to enjoy the present time? Analogized with a house, human's body is vulnerable by a number of unguarded openings those are our eyes, mouth, nose, mind, desire, and feeling. To make it even worse, we expose ourselves to the horrible images in television and violent dialogues in radio. And thus life becomes a wrecked house.

All are sent as guides from the beyond. All happenings bring guidance and counsels

By the profound understanding on this matter, a lot of people then secure their windows with the guardians of mindfulness and patience. Activating these guardians is very simple, and moreover, it is completely free: only by paying attention to the breathing. Anyone

who has taken a long journey of meditation knows that when we frequently observe our breathing we can embrace the eternal presence.

The past has gone and the future has not come yet, therefore both are not at hand. The only moment in time available to be hugged is the present, and in order to do so is as simple as to smile, see, enjoy, and be grateful as we are inhaling and exhaling the air.

It will be even easier to be performed if one has become as amazing as Jalalludin Rumi: all are sent as guides from the beyond. All happenings bring guidance and counsels.

Realizing the peaceful world through the tranquility of the self is difficult indeed, still it is the only way

Success is beautiful, and so does failure.

Does failure not informing us of our limitations? Being acknowledged as a saintly figure is good, but being identified as a charlatan is good as well because it keeps us humble. Everything do provides guidance.

With this point of view, unification with the eternal present can be done easier and with beauty. Calmness makes everything more lovely.

Moreover, this practice can also be performed outside of the meditation room. It can be conducted as we open our eyes in the morning, wash our face with the water from the sink, smile to the traffic jam, lead a meeting, and hug our beloved ones once we get home. This is the peace in each step.

In His Holiness Dalai Lama's words, realizing the peaceful world through the tranquility of the self is difficult indeed, still it is the only way. Therefore the beauty of breathing needs to be accompanied by mindfulness in every contact of the senses. When we see something (an annoying person, for example), the vision will give raise to a certain feeling. Examine whether this feeling makes alliance with mindfulness or ignorance. It will generates calmness if it collaborates with mindfulness, but it will produces sadness if it is hauled by anger.

Every step that is enlightened by mindfulness and patience will become a step of tranquility and divinity. In this subject, Thich Nhat Hanh is incomparable. In some of his works (from Present Moment Wonderful Moment till Peace is Every Step) he always highlighted the significance of peacefulness in this present time. Wherever he is, he will take a short pause, breath, and get connected with the present until the bell is ringing. In his meditation room in Plum village, France, he writes: Breathe, You are still alive!



9  
*Home of Peace*

Whether it is within Balinese conscious mind or not,  
Balinese have been requesting peace, peace and  
peace for their island for many centuries

## *Home of Peace*

Following the famous movie shooting titled Eat, Pray, Love in Bali early 2010 starring Julia Roberts, many people around the world call Bali as the Island of Love. An island that is full of passion and aroma of Love. For ordinary ears, this is a common story. For those who receptive enough to cosmic symbols, such signs should be wisely observed.

By keep respecting others birth place, locations in which many revelations and prophets had ever born are in flame. Conflicts in Middle East such as Israel-Palestine are still far from final resolutions. India and Pakistan border clash with guns and artillery can be heard by many who live nearby frequently. Tibetan tantric land that has been the roof of the world since the beginning of time, through Chinas culture revolution, part of Tibets original culture had vanished.

In the other part of time, Bali also had experiencing terrifying moments in 1965. The two times terrorist bomb blast in Bali was even contemplated as moments of spreading peace. When Amrozy (one of the Bali bombing key actor) buried in east Java, many figures of various religious representatives in Bali came and joined the prayer for Amrozy. On the top of that, following such events, Bali has been awarded as the best tourist destination island in the world for multiple times by several global media.

Combined as one, there are series of cosmic signs that are wise enough for us to uncover. The good news is there is a chance that the Bali island aroma and passion of love spread around the world. Bad odor of hatred, anger, and war that shape our world received a neutralized power from the Bali island aroma and passion of love. It would be wonderful if Balinese welcoming the arrival of this light of love with practicing love and compassion on the daily basis. The bad news is without proper rectification and preparation on the needed sector, the passion and aroma of love will only invite unfavorable investors and travelers that will accelerating the collapse of the island.

Home is a place that has been the dream of many of us. Safety, comfort, serenity, and peacefulness are the feelings that present if we are already home. Many have found home in Bali. Home of love and peace

## Spiritual Home

Home is a place that has been the dream of many of us. Safety, comfort, serenity, and peacefulness are the feelings that present if we are already home. For this reason, many have found home in Bali. Home of love and peace to make it more specific.

Unfortunately, in a time that has been marked by too many cosmic disorders, only few of us already found home. As the evident, people are easily exhausted, tired, and offended by numerous problems. More than that, crime, divorce, fight, and war have been rising in recent time. These showed how people are already too far from home.

Crime, divorce,  
fight, and war  
showed how  
people are  
already too far  
from home

In Bali, nature has been giving many signs like the shortage of frangipani flower (Kamboja) , Balinese dogs that have been protecting the island for hundreds of years now become the source of rabies, and the weather

becomes more and more uncertain. Humans behavior also change in this island, not only when it comes to power they are fighting, even when it come to religious rituals few have been unfriendly toward each other.

In total, there should be some kind of invitation for the

Balinese to return back home. More specifically, Bali Island can be saved from the hasty influence of time. It would be lucky enough if it is possible to preserve the Bali island aroma and passion of love for a long time.

It is impossible to separate the hill from its green, it is impossible as well to separate the sky from its blue, similarly it is impossible to separate Bali Island from Parama Shanti (the ultimate peace). It has been taught from generation to generation that the summit of Balinese prayer is Parama Santhi. After coming out of Pura (temple), Balinese should say Santhi (peace) three times. To end a conversation, Balinese

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Not only in Himalayan peak that insights can be found,  
within us, the peak of captivating insights is exist as well

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should say Santhi three times as well. Therefore whether it is within Balinese conscious mind or not, Balinese have been requesting peace, peace and peace for their island for many centuries.

Peace of mind, that is the spiritual home of the Balinese. As the physical home that invites longing when gone, which bring come comfort upon arrival, spiritual home also similar. Peace of mind, thats the place where Balinese can find tranquility.

Maybe because of reading the signs of time where Balinese

will go too far from their spiritual home, thus in Pura Kehen (Kehen Temple) Bangli, the elders left old inscriptions which has been preserved there for hundreds of years that contain the invitation of coming home.

## Home of Soul

Actually not only Balinese that has been exhausted by keep searching here and there but never find home. Many have faced similar exhaustion. Many Westerners are still hungry within their material wealth. Many Easterners are also thirsty in the calm water of elders wisdom.

In the genius words of Franz Kafka : “meaning of life is opened when we learn to stop”. For those who have been searching for a long time can smile shyly when reading to Kafka message. It turns out not only in Himalayan peak that insights can be found, within us, the peak of captivating insights is exist as well.

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The difference with the teenagers love that full of desire for the loved to be this and that, this kind of love is the love that easily invites tears

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For many Balinese that have come into this understanding are aware why elders establish Pura jati (the true home) in the point where Batur mountain (Linggam or spirit of the

masculine) kiss the lips of Batur lake (Yoni or the spirit of feminime). The message is simple, stop opposing the duality of good-bad, right-wrong, holy-dirty, rich-poor, and take a total rest on anything that is happening at the present, especially by implementing the lifes call with devotion minus complain. This is home of soul.

Unfortunately, it has been too long people are exhausted from opposing the holy against the unholy, the right fight against the wrong. And whenever these fight and combat come to an end, we will arrive in the true home. This is the home of Parama Santhi. In this home, all life ingredients will be processed into love, devotion, peacefulness, and offering. As the result, Bali island aroma and passion of love will meet the passion and aroma of the Balinese. This can avoid the Balinese and Bali island from entering the ravine of downfall.

In line with the cosmic message that is told in the film titled Eat, Pray, Love where delicious foods are found in Italia, beautiful prayer is found in India, and captivating love can be found in Bali this is Bali that I love. Bali that emits the fragrance of love everywhere in the midst of a world that enveloped by anger and hatred. The difference with the teenagers love that full of desire for the loved to be this and that, this kind of love is the love that easily invites tears. Not the tears of sadness, but touched by the discovery how noble the Bali island is.



*10*  
*The Inner Peace*

As has been taught by many life of the masters, they all grow because of obstacles

## *The Inner Peace*

It has become the daily life menu of everybody that life is never absent of problem. When family problem solved, then office call telling that something need further decision. If the relationship with spouse recovered, children waiting for another help. Thinking that children school life is smooth, suddenly a teacher calls that she needs your help to lessen school burden created by your son.

Problem, problem and problem. Without giving any chance to run away, problem keep visiting everybody. The poor think that the rich have no problem, but in reality many well off people even face much complicated life than the poor. The rich who have been very boring with many complexities of being rich are jealous with those who they think enjoying simple life, but in fact these followers of simple life are also do not enjoy problem free of life.

## Problems as Vitamin

In the light of this understanding, it might be wise to stop dreaming of enjoying life which is only happy without any sadness. No matter how rich you are, how powerful some one, how famous a star is, problems is always appear like sun rise in the morning. No prayers that can prevent the appearance of obstacles.

Deeply realizing this, any one who want to grow spiritually need to change the standing point of viewing problem. To less succesful inner traveller, problem tend to be put as poison.

That's  
people  
inner  
has  
taught  
life of

We in the east call masters as  
Mahasidha (people who had passed  
through extraordinary trials to achieve  
profound understanding)

why many  
fail to gain  
growth. As  
been  
by many  
the

masters, they all grow because of obstacles. In the beginning of journey, they also run away, but as soon as they realized that life is an opportunity to grow then they begin to treat problem as vitamin. Surprisingly, problem then become a strengthening factor.

That's why we in the east call masters as Mahasidha (people who had passed through extraordinary trials to achieve profound understanding). Look at the story of Jesus Christ,

Jalalludin Rumi, Mahatma Gandhi, Buddha Gautama, they all grow because of facing great obstacles, learn from it, the most important thing let problems strengthened their life.

## Flower Blossoming because of the Sun

Pema Chodron in her enlightening book When Things Fall Apart, is an inspiring example in this case. After serving life by being a good house wife for more than twenty years, suddenly

divorce made her life fall apart. Because of this, she came to meditation center. Years later, she did not just being facilitated by meditation, but also become one of a well known and well respected meditation master in North America.

Any one who reach samadhi very often, they open the cool door of wisdom. In the home of wisdom, everything is teacher who lead us to grow

In meditation centers, students start the journey by following many codes of conduct. In Sanskrit they call it sila (power that makes someone cooler and calmer) consist of rules suchs as not to kill, not to steal, not to commit any sexual misconduct,

not to lie and not to eat or drink any thing that can cloud awareness. The combination between following codes of conduct and the serious practise of meditation bring student to experience samadhi (concentration). Any one who reach samadhi very often, they open the cool door of wisdom. In

the home of wisdom, everything is teacher who lead us to grow. Not only the succes is a sign of growth, the failure is also a sign of growth. Since failure gives us feedback on our true capacity. Not only the rich life is an improvement, the poor life is also an improvement because being poor is a golden chance of being humble.

When life is full of flowers don't forget that any flower will become garbage. If life is full of garbage, please remember to process it into flower

Borrowing the logic of gardening, most flowers finally blossom because of the hot sun shine. The same thing also happen to those life who entered the home of wisdom. Problems are like sun shine, the wise is similar to flower that is ready to blossom. When the two meet, that is the beginning of beauty.

In the language of a wise Guru, life is consist of both flowers and garbages. Any flower will become garbage in the following day. Organic garbage (as long as you are able to manage it) can become flowers. The lesson then, when life is full of flowers (by which read: rich, famous) don't forget that any flower will become garbage. If life is full of garbage (obstacles, challenges, down fall), please remember to process it into flower.

In the golden light of this understanding, problems may arise any time, but since we're well equipped, then any thing (obstacles, challenges, opportunity, enemy) turn into flower. This is inner peace. Every direction appear to be the direction of peace.

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Problems are like sun shine, the wise is similar to flower that is ready to blossom. When the two meet, that is the beginning of beauty



*11*  
*Scripture In The Heart*

## *Scripture In The Heart*

On a journey from Jakarta to Yogyakarta, one of friend who is from Bali ask: "What is your holy scripture?". When it was answered by scripture in the heart, he smiled politely. To be honest, a lot of people try to find solution in holy scripture. Some even have to pay very expensive price going to a place very far to find the cool holy scripture. And it has been recorded in the diary of many seekers, few who find coolness and softness in holy scripture.

### **Curing the Soul**

Whether because of these factors or other factors, many new generations begin to distance themselves from ceremonies, holy places, holy scripture. In Bali for example, there are some younger generation who ask critical questions about ceremony.

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Outside be like the ordinary citizen. In the depth of the deep  
decorate the heart with touching service

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And to be sincere, of course there is meaning behind ceremony. But the ritual can cure the soul longing to go home, when the sacred teachings that are stored behind ceremony understood properly. Just as a simple example, before someone begin to learn the sacred books seriously, Balinese elders suggested one to conduct mewinten ceremony. Sort of cleaning up one's mind, heart and soul in order to open the

Once the walls  
of small and  
stunted self  
collapsed, then  
Great Self was  
born. And the  
only rest is rest  
in service

soul of sacred book, because only the pure can open the pure.

One of the stage in this mewinten ceremony, diciple must taste all the flavors. From sweet, sour, salty, bitter, etc. The message is simple, only those who have passed all the flavors (success-failure, elevated-demeaned, rich-poor,

etc.) can sit peacefully on the top of all flavors. After spending years of time taking the same distance to all flavors of life, then one can possibly become the friend of holy book. If one still hungry to excessive wealth, praise, recognition, and at the same time hate poverty, curses punishment, it's hard to imagine that there is friendship with holy scripture. It is as hard as imagining that water can become the good friend of fire.

Outside cloth can be replaced within minutes, the hair can be shaved in a few moments, the ceremony can be held in one

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After spending years of time taking the same distance  
to all flavors of life, then one can possibly become  
the friend of holy book

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day, the house can be renovated in short time, but to make the mind, heart, soul quietly sitting on top of all the flavors of life take long years of deep practice. In the story of many holy Masters of the past, it takes more than one life. And all of these holy Masters spending most of energy on inner cultivation. Only through inner cultivation soul can possibly cured.

## Scripture of Great Self

The unique characteristic of digging down inside is simple, layer by layer one unlocking the secrets of what Ramana Maharsi referred as the Self. There have been too long human life are miserable in a small and stunted self. Small and stunted self is the thing that preventing one to see God in every creation. As well as hindering the soul to return back home. Sometimes someone asked the difference between the small self and the Great Self. Recognizing small self is easy, look inside when one is abused, insulted, betrayed. When there is burning anger, at the same time one is pulled by a large magnet of revenge, that is small and stunted self. It makes one separated from the rest of the world. The small self built walls. The stunted self wants life which is safe and

The ritual can cure the soul longing to go home, when the sacred teachings that are stored behind ceremony understood properly

Sadness, grief are not fuel of anger,  
it is a moment of connection

comfortable free from the disturbance of others.

The Great Self is far from being small and stunted. It is without walls, without fire of rage. It is very similar to what

When one begins to be able to love those who harmed, that's the sign of the Great Self was born

was shown by the island of Bali after the terrorist bombing. The island of Bali protected the feeling, emotion, psychological situation of Balinese. As a result of it, not even a single small stone was thrown to the others shrine. Despite the long list of Balinese suffering after the bombing, Bali still considered as one of

rare peaceful place in the world. Some of the international media even put Bali as one of the best tourist destination in the world. The message is simple, sadness, grief are not fuel of anger, it is a moment of connection. Only with such perfectly balance and calm mind in the face of sadness, then all the walls of small and stunted self collapse. At the same time, it gives birth to the Great Self.

In the community of the Great Self, there is a simple phrase: "when one begins to be able to love those who harmed, that's the sign of the Great Self was born". While most people are homesick and missing home of soul, the one who discovered the

No need to go anywhere, no need to be somebody. Just be opened, here in this heart there is holy scripture. Holy scripture which is specifically written for oneself alone

Great Self is free from

longing for home. Most of these holy people have ever left a message like this: "No need to go anywhere, no need to be somebody. Just be opened, here in this heart there is holy scripture. Holy scripture which is specifically written for oneself alone". In the gathering of Great Self, it is common that everyone talk like this: "one who can not find holy scripture in the heart, it is not suggested to search it some where else" . And quiet different to the common holy scriptures that can be easily shared, discussed, this scripture of the heart is very hard to be explained by using ordinary language. As hard as explaining the taste of banana to ones who never eat banana. That's why Lao Tze wrote: "One who knows do not speak. One who speaks do not know".

One who can not find holy scripture in the heart, it is not suggested to search it some where else

## Resting in Service

Not all of the Great Self are interested in wearing holy cloth. Some decided to wear ordinary clothes, common language, regular job. The only difference is the depth of service to others. Like Nelson Mandela who appear to be politician but totally dedicate life to the others, similar to Muhammad Yunus who got nobel peace prize in the midst of Bangladesh poverty. Borrowing the touching message of Mahatma Gandhi: "Losing oneself in the service of others". In the

language of this simple and humble article, once the walls of small and stunted self collapsed, then Great Self was born. And the only rest is rest in service.

The basis of action is simple: "Conforming outside, perfectly pure inside, provide hands to help". Outside be like the ordinary citizen. In the depth of the deep decorate the heart with touching service.

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One who knows do not speak.  
One who speaks do not know

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*12*  
*Perfect As It Is*

Be kind and humble, that's the natural home of the Balinese.  
It is as natural as lake which is blue, as natural  
as mountain which is green

## *Perfect As It Is*

In every tradition there is unique characteristic worthy of study. For anyone whose childhood was in Bali, then often ask about religious matters to the elders, the elders then answer with a smile: "Nak Mula Keto". The simple translation, indeed it is. Implicitly means, everything is perfect as it is. For young generation whose minds are hungry for answers, adult who are thirsty of debating, excited by the fights, this answer is indeed very disappointing. Some even called it stupid.

But the yogis who has cultivated deep inside will smile. Where did elders find such profound answers, if not by way of deep yoga. Even in the present time, when knowledge is plentiful, free in internet, very few teachers who have direct realization of "nak mula keto".

Not only fruits are offering, a series of services is also offering, even deeper offering. Through services we do not only do inner offering, but also return back to home of naturalness

A disciple once asked about the zen enlightenment. The teacher calmly replied, enlightenment is blue lake and green mountain. Put it simply, in the stage of enlightenment, all is perfect as it is. A holy message which is very similar to "nak mula keto".

## Home of Naturalness

Fatigue, that is one of the important characteristic of civilization. Even developed countries such as the United States and Japan were showing signs of fatigue. War, crime, fights, divorce, suicide is only partial marks. And a very

Heavy rain does not make the water increases, drought does not make the water decreases. The only thing that left after this, flow that is home

decisive factor behind all of this, people always want to have more and more.

At the top of this fatigue, it is wise to deeply contemplate on the message of Nak Mula Keto.

One who is a teacher, learn to

find perfection in carrying out educational tasks. One who is a farmer, look at the abundance of available in natural perfection. One who is a civil servant, find growth opportunities in serving the public. One who have children with autism, sick parents, find perfection in deep service of the others. Not only fruits are offering, a series of services is also offering, even deeper offering. Through external offerings

Three types of samadhi: samadhi of suchness,  
samadhi of illumination, samadhi of seed Syllable

we present things outside, through services we do not only do inner offering, but also return back to home of naturalness.

Note the first song that children learn in the old village of Bali (Eda ngaden awak bisa). It is full of lessons of being humble in serving life. Look at the unique smile of local Balinese. All of this reminding all of us, be kind and humble, that's the natural home of the Balinese. It is as natural as lake which is blue, as natural as mountain which is green.

Do not forget to return back home. Returning to the natural home of kindness and humbleness

For anyone who has experienced to be back home, can see that from the beginning to the end everything is perfect as it is. It is similar to water in nature. Heavy rain does not make the water increases, drought does not make the water decreases. The only thing that left after this, flow that is home.

That's why in Tantra people know three types of samadhi (concentration): samadhi of suchness, samadhi of illumination, samadhi of seed Syllable. The first concentration occurs when all looks perfect as it is (nak mula keto). Coconut tree is beautiful on the beach, pine is fresh on the mountain. Everything has its own unique place. The second concentration happen when a yogi encounter the inner light. Like the ordinary light, positive is synthesized with negative, then everything is clear as it is. The third concentration is very

secret, something to do with inner holy syllable, which is very unique and autentic.

As soon as we arrive home, all know that we are sky not clouds, we are ocean not waves. In Kintamani, Balinese elders called it Pura Jati (The true home)

All of these give inspiration, everything (good-bad, right-wrong , holy-dirty ) are the same dancing of the same God. Sorrow

and temptation are just brooms that cleaning the inner room of soul. Joy and happiness are like water to the thirsty soul. For students of Buddha, all is Buddha. There is Buddha within mara (evil), there is mara within Buddha.

## The True Home

Kehen temple in Bangli saved an old inscription containing an invitation to return back home. To be honest, too many people who have gone too far from home. Some even forget home. And in the midst stress and depression such as rising suicide rate, rising crime, rampant divorce, political conflicts here and there, this might be a good time to remember the message stored in the temple Kehen: *mulih De!* Son, do not forget to return back home. Returning to the natural home of kindness and humbleness.

The meaning of home is very varied. But as childhood

experience, as soon as we return back home, there is a sense of calm and serene at home. And through the message of nak mula keto, Balinese are reminded of the way home. Happy-sad, joy-sorrow, success-failure are all like clouds to the sky, like the waves to the ocean. Clouds never disturb the sky, waves never hurt the ocean. As soon as we arrive home, all know that we are sky not clouds, we are ocean not waves. In Kintamani, Balinese elders called it Pura Jati (The true home).

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For high levels of yogis in Bali, the holy message of nak mula keto could be a secret key. The mind of the one who is home is like space. It provides place to anything and anyone to grow. That 's why the elders who was home already only have two languages: silent and smile. Silent because whether we explain it or not thing is perfect as it is, smile because whether we agree or not everything is perfect as it is.

In layman 's eyes, this achievement can be called negative (passive, not doing anything). But to the enlightened masters, this is awesome. Similar to trees, enlightened master is silent outside, but inside he/she process all carbon dioxide (by which read : negative atmospheres) into oxygen of peace that is needed everywhere.



*13*  
*Holy Water of Compassion*

Life is like garden that keeps growing. This month flower of success blooming, next month weeds of failure emerge. Only by keep loving, then life becomes land of growth

## *Holy Water of Compassion*

In the West, Buddhism has long been a garden of compassion. Sort of a cool shelter in the midst of burning civilization. That's why, at the end of 1960 Martin Luther King Jr. nominated Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh as the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, in 1989 His Holiness the Dalai Lama was actually awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Sadly, in early July 2013 in Bodhgaya India - the place where Lord Buddha attained enlightenment - terrorist bomb exploded. The question then, will the civilization lose one of the cool shelters?

### **In Growing One Finds Balance**

To be honest, life is like garden that keeps growing. Not like sprint where there is final line. This month flower of success

blooming, next month weeds of failure emerge. Only by keep loving, then life becomes land of growth. The situation is similar to riding a bicycle, balance is found only when the bike is moving.

In this understanding, enlightenment is not a life that is always peaceful and happy. Enlightenment is a state of mind that keep flowing and uniting as well. It is like the well experienced gardener. Flower bloom is a gift, but any flower will become waste in the next day. Whether one like or not, weeds keep appearing, and gardener will clean it again and again without any complain. Primarily because the nature of the flowers droop, the nature of the weeds keep appearing. As a result, the beauty of flower does not create any attachment, the appearance of weed does not cause any anger.

That's why, in Zen many highly realized masters who use garden as a means of growth as well as a mirror of attainment. Garden is a means of growth because it facilitates gardener to grow along with the plants. Parks are mirror of attainment because it gives feed back to gardeners how perfect their compassion is. One who diligently practice meditation like this, one day he/she will understand that balance (by which



Enlightenment is a state of mind that keep flowing and uniting. Flower bloom is a gift, but any flower will become waste. The beauty of flower does not create any attachment, the appearance of weed does not cause any anger

read: enlightenment) is found only in growth.

## Violence Opens Door of Compassion

Lightened by the art of gardening, enlightened beings see violence differently. Similar to park, violence is like trees that dry. Trees withered not because of their willing, but because we failed to water them. There are long list of our failures in watering the dry trees of violence. From parents who are not ready to be a parent, schools that fail to soften the heart of students, religion that is translated for the interest of power, the poor role model of leaders, until the medias who like to preach violence.

In the hands of the enlightened beings, darkness is seen as an opportunity to turn on the light

In the midst of this failure, ones who commit violence are just "victims" of a dry environment, not the true "actor" of violence. Sadly, these victims then chased, shot and killed.

In this light, violence is an energy that reminding people to keep watering the garden of life. Borrowing a number of studies on the fundamentalists, fundamentalists assumed that they are going to be attacked. In other words, there are fire of suspicion and anger in their mind. And this kind of fire can only be extinguished by the holy water of compassion. That's why, the most precious thing in daily life ritual of Balinese is holy water.

## Darkness Makes Light Even Brighter

In the path of compassion, violence is not seen like the soldiers who carry guns, violence is seen as fire that crying for water. In the other analogy, violence is the same as darkness. Darkness is not the enemy of light, darkness makes light shines even brighter.

In some traditions, this time is called dark age. There are a lot of signs. From war, conflict, corruption. However, in the hands of the enlightened beings, darkness is seen as an opportunity to turn on the light. That's why, being enlightened in the dark being the who iron into east the transform poison into medicine. Violence is like poison, but when it is appropriately blended, then it becomes a medicine that heals.

Rest in compassion, that's how  
poison of dark age is transformed  
into medicine that cure

age is like  
alchemist  
transform  
gold, in the  
alchemist

Hydrogen and oxygen are closer to fire, but when both are blended appropriately into H<sub>2</sub>O, it becomes water which is cool and soft. This latest smart blending that can extinguish fires of violence as well as watering the garden of life. In the language of meditation, whatever happens just "rest" (read: see thing as it is). Not like the ordinary rest, but rest in

compassion. Rest in compassion, that's how poison of dark age is transformed into medicine that cure. From a heart that has been sprinkled by holy water of compassion ever heard a touching message like this: "Violence can destroy holy sites, but violence can not destroy a compassionate heart".

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Violence can destroy holy sites, but  
violence can not destroy a  
compassionate heart

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*14*  
*Island of Compassion*

Balinese ceremony is love ceremony. A series of love rituals that is intended to make all sentient beings happy and free from suffering

## *Island of Compassion*

When Professor Karen Armstrong (one of the spiritual giants of our time) visited Indonesia in early June 2013, she looks obviously impressed with the story of Bali as an island of compassion. One day after the author of the book “Twelve Steps to Compassionate Life” heard this story, in front of so many participants in Jakarta she openly told that she could not sleep after hearing this story. Even after her return to England she was still taking the time to send an e-mail message that contains approximately like this: “I was so moved by your speech ... let’s keep in touch about making Bali an island of compassion”.

## Loving Flower to Terrorists

The cosmic message of Bali bombing is clear. It happened exactly one digit after the terrorist attacks in the United States. To put it more precisely, in the U.S. it occurred in september 11th 2001 and in Bali it happened in october 12th 2002. From the date of eleven to the date of twelve, from month of september to month of october, from the year of 2001 to the year of 2002. And when the terrorist attacked New York City it was followed by a counterattack of countless bullets that costing a lot of lifes, in Bali there was not even a single small stone was thrown into the holy place of non Balinese. The most touching thing, the person who received many international medals because of saving a lot of lifes after the bombing was a muslim leader Mr. Haji Bambang.

Elsewhere, all the terrorist bombings were followed by the fire of anger and revenge. But in Bali, as the story above, terrorists were even given “loving flower”. After learning from this event, in the depths of meditation ever heard: “samsara is at the head, nirvana is in the heart”. And the depth of

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By feeding the lower creatures, this does not mean that the Balinese worship the devil. It is the honest mirror of perfect compassion

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compassion will determine where a person will go. It's not coincidence that the beginning part of the word compassion is "compass", the middle part is "pass". This is the compass of the path. One who follows the path by using compassion as the compass, one day he/she will pass.

## Rituals of Love

One thing that unique in Bali, there are rituals everywhere. More surprisingly, the ceremony is not devoted to the upper realms such as gods, goddesses, God, Buddha only, but also to feed the lower realm like satan. In almost every house there is penunggun karang, the kind of home for the spirits that has lived there first. By feeding the lower creatures, this does not mean that the Balinese worship the devil, once again not!. It is the honest mirror of perfect compassion. When we can feed the devil, it is easier to provide offerings to God. If one can give space for the creatures of the dark, it is easy to provide room for the creatures of the light.

People were born here on this planet to bless this planet with love, kindness, compassion

Cycle of time in Bali is divided into time of going up (worshiping the upper realm), and the time that goes down (feeding the lower realm). There are holy days to say thank you to the trees, animals, goods. And of course there are the holy days of worshiping the upper realm. In the contemporary

language, Balinese ceremony is love ceremony. A series of love rituals that is intended to make all sentient beings happy and free from suffering.

And this type of rituals is not only a monopoly of Bali. In southern France and northern Greece, archaeologists found the caves millions of years old. On the walls of the cave there are very long reliefs carved in the rock, telling the love of people to animals because animals were the main source of food at that time. The similar thing happen to Tibet, one part of Tibetan ceremony also feed the lower creatures. Merge into one, from long long time ago human heart is longing for compassion.

## Compassionate Beings

Illuminated by the story of love ceremony, it is clear that human being is actually a compassionate being. People were born here on this planet to bless this planet with love, kindness, compassion. And this planet is blessed when human being reinventing the authentic and holistic Self. That's why, the Balinese elder called human being as "dewa ya kala ya". Inside human being there is God and the devil as well. However, the devil is not the enemy of God.



Health and whole  
were reinvented when  
human embrace all  
dualities with the  
same quality of smile

Both are part of what the psychologist Carl G. Jung called as authentic Self.

In the early stage, religions called anger, revenge, envy as representative of darkness. Religions also called kindness, love, compassion as the representative of light. But without the darkness, the light loses its meaning. Health and whole were reinvented when human embrace all dualities (including the duality of God-satan) with the same quality of smile. Meditation is very helpful in this regard as the most important task of meditation is to be a compassionate witness.

But this is far from easy. In the language of Carl G. Jung: “The most terrifying thing in life is accepting oneself completely”. Particularly it is really hard to the unauthentic beings to accept shortages, bad luck, imperfections. That’s why in another part of Jung’s work he wrote: “People will do everything to avoid the Soul”. Human being will do anything to get away from the Soul, because for people who do not complete and authentic yet the encounter with the Spirit is very scary.

To help people meeting the Soul peacefully, in Bali God was named Embang. In the absolute terms, Embang is very close to wisdom, emptiness, silence. That’s why Bali is the only island in the world that celebrate the new year with silence day. Since emptiness provides space to grow without any discrimination, the relative aspect of Embang (God) is perfect compassion. This is reflected in the sincerity to feed the lower

realms, as well as providing shelter for them. And this finding is supported by the cosmic messages in the form of famous film/ book “Eat, Pray, Love”. According to the latest famous work, nice food was available in Italy, beautiful prayers were heard in India, and touching love is found in Bali. Great poet Rabin Dranath Tagore went to Bali once, and called Bali as “Morning of the World”.

Hearing a presentation like this, through facial expressions, body language, the email that was sent – even promised to tell this story to the United States – it was obvious that Professor Karen Armstrong was very impressive when she heard this conclusion: “Not only Seattle worth mentioning the city of compassion, it is also worth mentioning Bali as an island of compassion”.



*15*

*Peace, Peace, Peace*

One who is in harmony with emptiness is in harmony with all things

## *Peace, Peace, Peace*

It is very unlikely that the great physician Albert Einstein ever expected that the development of science and technology would be as vast as how it is now. However, it is the law of nature that there shall never be any improvement without sacrifice. In this respect, the progress of science and technology takes a great cost indeed.

Humans capability to utilize science and technology advances greatly followed by an even greater force of destruction. Referring to the outcome of a research in The Social Construction of Technological Systems conducted by some experts in the particular field (as Bijker, Hughes, Pinch ), it is identified that even though we, human, initially developed science and technology in order to provide assistance, presently we are facing difficulties in adjusting to our own discoveries.

All aspects of life (religion included) are unsuccessfully responding to the immensity of science and technology's advancement.

During the pour of a cold rain, chickens take shelter under the trees while ducks plunge their selves into ponds. All are perfect and happy in their natural habitation

Observe the leading countries in the science and technology development such as the United States, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany and France, one will distinguish that there are numerous disheartening social indicators (as depression, mental disorders, war and conflict) that

signify that science and technology are not merely fail to provide solution to those indicators for they even give birth to further sophistications.

The situation is similar to the race between the development of pesticide and the evolution of its target. The harder science and technology struggle to terminate them, the more bugs with advance and complicated immunity emerge. Global warming and never-ending conflicts are only a few examples among the science and technology's lacks of competence in this issue.

In the midst of these ineptitudes let there be a time when it is not science and technology those speak but silence. In this matter, the authors intention is not to alter the common order and definitely not to lecture, but solely to share fragments of contemplation.

## Perfection in Nature

When J. Krishnamurti presented the idea to return to the childrens innocence of vision (therefore his masterpiece was entitled Freedom from the Known), a lot of Westerners frowned their eyebrows as a sign of puzzlement. Some even suspected the matter as a stepping back in spiritual evolution.

People definitely own the very right to have whatever opinion as they wish. As free as a butterfly perches lightly on a flower and as liberate as an eagle flies high in the sky. A soul frequently experience union with nature will recognize the perfection that lies within.

Coconut trees grow on sunny beaches while Casuarinas remain fresh on the cool mountains. Fishes swim the water, wolves roam the woods. During the pour of a cold rain, chickens take shelter under the trees while ducks

plunge their selves into ponds. All are perfect and happy in their natural habitation. No words, analysis, judgment nor comparison needed for the only thing required is the effort to see things as they are. Whoever might flow perfectly in this nature, he or she has become the perfection itself.



The life of an ascetic  
is similar to a tree:  
walking toward the  
light in flawless  
serenity and  
wholeheartedness

By doing a more profound study about nature, one shall witness that everything flow without grievance. Every day and night, no matter how scorching or freezing the temperature is, nature accepts all seasons without any melancholy. The outer performance of nature might seem weak and submissive for the ignorance, while the seers may behold in wonder how the inner side of nature is magnificently firm in its frankness.

Trees, in particular, are extraordinary models. Eons before the mortal prophets taught about the sincerity within silence, trees have been practicing the very attitude in absolute wordlessness. Therefore, Kahlil Gibran admired trees for they might serve as the symbols of the recluses those are stepping toward the light in perfect silence and sincerity.

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generated by the  
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their nature

An Australian reputed architect, Andrian Snodgrass, wrote in his profound masterpiece *The Symbolism of the Stupa* that stupa and pagoda of the Buddhists and the Balinese meru share the same point in which they are intending to demonstrate how the life of an ascetic is similar to a tree: walking toward the light in flawless serenity and wholeheartedness. Ramana Maharsi, a divine recluse in Arunachala hill (India), termed this journey as Dhaksinamurti (Shiva teachings in silence); that is Shiva that might only be greeted in silence.

By this point of view, then it is outstandingly wonderful that our Moslems fellows define the word Islam as complete sincerity before God. The same greatness also reflected by Jesus Christ whose inner expression was so full of loving-kindness even when His physical body was experiencing the sorrow of crucifixion.

## **Home of Harmony**

This kind of supreme submissiveness is more likely to be achieved when there is no more desire left, no more lamenting the past nor fearing the future. The only matter remains then is a perfect sincerity in this eternal present-time that belongs to a tranquil and silent spirit.

In relation to this subject, Nagarjuna once stated that: One who is in harmony with emptiness is in harmony with all things. This is the cause for Simpkins and Simpkins conclusion that emptiness is marvelous.

Sakyamuni Buddha was once insistently questioned by His disciple during a walk in a forest. Buddha then took a handful of leaves and asked whether the leaves in His hand or those scattered on the ground were greater in number. Obviously, the quantity of leaves in His hand was nothing compared to the ones spread on the earth. Words are similar to the leaves in ones hand: they are limited and often become the sources of

arguments that spoil the journey.

This might be the reason of numerous Balinese difficulty in touching the ultimate peace as the finale of their worship. A word always leads to its antonym. Wrong is contradicted to right, failure to success, divinity to impurity, and there come the clamors into life.

The seekers who dare to bring words back to the original position as instruments, and then guides their selves with the tree-like qualities during their inner wondering, shall return to the children's purity of vision and reach the supreme understanding of ultimate peace, that there is nothing positive to accept nor anything negative to reject. They will achieve the condition termed by Suzuki Roshi as Zen mind beginners mind. Moreover, they are going to experience the existence of shanti, shanti, shanti (peace, peace, peace) within their spirit.

It should be understood that the peace mentioned here is not the one that might be contradicted to chaos, as well as it is not the kind of peace that may be followed by attachment and suffering upon its departure. Instead, this peace is generated by the perfection of all in their nature. In the center point of Pura Besakih Bali (between kiwa and tengen) it is termed as Parama Shunya (the supreme emptiness). Buddha referred to it as Shunyata. In Rohit Mehta's words (The Call of the Upanishads), there is silence in chaos as well as there is chaos within silence.

These elaborations conclude that nothingness is the real/ultimate self. For those with emptiness alone dwells in their spirit, the only purpose of the cycle of life is to give as they realize that liberation is the act of giving itself.

# Technical Terminologies

*Bhur Bwah Swah*: one of the way the Balinese understands God (influenced by Hinduism). In which God consist of lower, middle, and also upper realms. That's the reason the Balinese provides offering to the upper, provide food to the lower, and respecting nature and all inhabitants. Read also *penunggun karang* and *segehan*.

*Kiwa-Tengen*: this is local genius of Bali island. The Balinese believe that there is always dynamics interplay between left (*kiwa*) and right (*tengen*). The ordinaries used to think – even though it is not totally true – the left is associated with dark power like black magic, the right is associated with bright power like kindness. In the depth of the deep, dynamics interaction of dualities (one of it is left-right) happens both outside and inside. Life flows dynamically. The ordinaries used to be dictated by these dualities, that is the reason why they suffer. The highly realized Masters sit above the two. In Besakih temple, the middle part of *kiwa-tengen* is called *Parama Shunya* (the ultimate silence). Some of Balinese elder called the

middle part as *sesarining dharma* (the essence of holy teachings). Read also *rwa-bhineda*.

*Nak Mula Keto*: Borrowing Joseph Campbell's The Power of Myth, myth is older than religions. Stories that are transmitted from generation to generation. One of Balinese myth that is still heard until now, every time the elders were asked the meaning of spiritual symbols, rituals, temple, etc, the elders answered it with short answer: "*Nak mula keto*". Simply means, indeed it is. In meditation language, everything is perfect as it is. Whether analyzed it or not, talk it or not, just as it is. It is very close to the spirit of silence day. Read also *Nyepi*.

*Nyegara Gunung*: a place where Balinese elder build shrine usually characterized by ocean or lake (*segara*) embrace mountain (*gunung*). Like the old Greek mythology of *anima-animus*. This is the symbol of the meeting between feminine spirit with spirit of masculine. It is a symbol of perfection, completeness, wholeness. Read also *pura Jati*

*Nyepi*: it is silence day. This is the way Balinese celebrate new year. One day before silence day Balinese try to destroy the power of darkness inside by symbolically burning *ogob-ogob* (wrathful statues), then in silence day Balinese are prohibited to do the ordinary life, it is suggested to be silence, cultivate deeply inside till meeting the silence of silence.

*Parama Shanti*: literally means ultimate peace. Looking into the daily life rituals of Balinese, ultimate peace is positioned as the peak of spiritual journey. In a more universal language, in the final analysis nothing but peace.

*Penunggun Karang*: this is also local genius of Bali island. In almost all houses of Balinese, there is small holy place that is intended to be the home of local spirits. The Balinese believe, before the place was made into home of human, it was occupied by local spirit. To maintain good harmony with all inhabitants, to express human compassion, local spirits are made new home. Read also *Bhur Bwah Swah, Segehan*.

*Pura*: temple or the holy place where the Balinese pray, do some rituals, meditate, yoga and other spiritual activities. Since the century of ten/eleven, after spiritual architecture of Balinese was rearranged by a great yogi Mpu Kuturan (a Mahayanist Buddhist monk), there is a temple near cemetery that is called pura Dalem (inner temple) where Shiva is worshiped. It left a material of contemplation about inner temple, the temple that is hidden here inside the heart.

*Pura Jati*: there are many temples in Bali. The one which is suitable depends on the depth of one's journey, or what we are looking for. To those who miss home of enlightenment (by which read: the true home), *pura Jati* (the true temple) is one of the option. One of the famous pura Jati located in Batur Kintamani. Where Batur lake (feminine spirit) embrace

mountain Batur (masculine spirit), in that place Balinese elder built “the true home”. Read also *Nyegara-Gunung*.

*Pura Kejen*: there are many old temples in Bali. Similar to the above explanation of pura Jati, the one which is suitable is depend on us. In pura Kejen Bangli, one of very old temple, Balinese elder saved very old spiritual message that reminding people always remember to be back home. It is not coincident that Bangli is the only town in Bali that has hospital for people with mental illness. Mental illness is symbol that people have been living too far away from home.

*Rwa-bhineda*: this is the basic philosophy of the Balinese. Similar to the Taoist Yin-Yang, life is always dynamically interact. Dualities (good-bad, holy-mundane, day-night, etc.) exist not as two powers that fight against each others, but as two powers that shining each others. There is an old saying in Bali like: “*suka tan pawali duka*”. Joy and sorrow are like flower and waste. Flower of happiness today will become waste of sadness tomorrow. All flow following it’s own nature. Read also *kiva-tengen*.

*Samadhi*: a state of mind which is perfectly focused. Some Masters teach that the focus should be certain object like breath, some other Masters suggest not to use any specific object but being one with the blessing of this moment. Some research concluded, this state of mind helps much in the process of healing. Many Masters experienced this state of

mind helps much in attaining high level realization.

*Segehan*: similar to Tibetan who provide food to the lower realm, Balinese also provide food to the lower inhabitants. Not because the Balinese worship evil. Once again not. It symbolizes the perfect compassion of Balinese elder. Read also *Bhur Bwah Swah* and *Penunggun Karang*

*Shanti*: it is Sanskrit word means peace. After finishing speech, finishing rituals, finishing a letter, Balinese used to mention the word shanti three times. Meaning all movements of life should be directed to maintain peace. Read also *Parama shanti*.



## *Gede Prama in Brief*

Gede Prama is a long inner inquirer. He began his spiritual journey when he was a small child in an old village northern part of Bali. Later on when he deeply learn the autobiographies of many *mahasiddha* (the enlightened), he begins to understand that childhood experiences pointed the journey to follow.

One of the touching childhood experience that Gede Prama deeply memorized, he was breastfed by his illiterate mom until the age of eight. For that reason, the essential meditation teaching that he keeps sharing to his students is “gently hug” everyone and everything. Include gently hugging pain,

suffering and enemies. These childhood experiences then are enriched by meditating, reading, researching, and personal meetings with some of world wide Gurus like HH Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Karen Armstrong.

Only because of the generosity of scholarship, Gede Prama can finish his post graduate study in England and France. After graduating, he started his career in corporate world in one of large Japanese company (National Panasonic), and he became CEO (president director) of one of biggest natural medicine in the country at the age of 38.

But this material accomplishments make his life very dry. That's why he left all luxuries of corporate world then begin a journey of being a servant. A servant of compassion, that is how he calls himself on his twitter account. As a result, tens of books, thousands of articles, thousands of short messages have been published everywhere. Some of his English e-books that can be freely accessed at [www.gedepramascompassion.com](http://www.gedepramascompassion.com) are:

1. Transforming Suffering Into The ultimate Healing
2. The Inner Symphony: Transforming Anger Into Flower
3. Enlightenment In The Moment
4. Compassion: Illuminating Inner Darkness, Rediscovering The Lost Home
5. Bali My Love: A Journey of Peace

To support his service to thousand of disciples, Gede Prama still teach at some large corporations like Citibank, IBM, Microsoft, World Bank, JP Morgan, etc in Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Hongkong, Melbourne, etc. to motivate their leaders.

Following his Guru, he keeps sharing this message everywhere he teach: “If you have to choose between religion and compassion, please choose compassion”. That is the reason why he condenses his teaching into one single sentence: “Compassion is my only present”.

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