Ten Metaphors of Transformation

It is said that human transformation was the only miracle the Buddha recognized as such.

Understand this if nothing else: Spiritual freedom and oneness with the Tao are not randomly bestowed gifts, but the rewards of conscious self-transformation and self-evolution.

(Lao-tzu)
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1. Awakening from the Dream of Reality

Arise, awake, and stop not until the Goal is reached!
(Upanishads)

Awakening from the dream of reality is a startling metaphor, comparing the transformation of consciousness to the change from dreaming to waking.

The metaphor of awakening is ancient, found in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sufism, as well as Christianity, Judaism, and Gnosticism; in a great deal of folklore, mythology, and literature.

Upon attaining a degree of awakening, we look back on the state of consciousness from which we have just emerged as resembling sleep, dreaming, hypnosis, or a trance, and we find ourselves with an expanded awareness, a more objective perception, and a greater sense of being in the here-and-now.

The metaphor of awakening implies an important philosophical world view: the view that our perception of reality, our ordinary awareness of the world, is a kind of dream, illusory and transient, and that it benefits our life to try to awaken from this sleep.
In some traditions, the end of life is compared to awakening from a sleep, the beginning of life – birth – is often compared to falling into a sleep. In Wordsworth’s ode *Intimations of Immortality* we read:

> Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
> The Soul that rises with us, our life’s Star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar.

The old Germanic legend of Sleeping Beauty is an enchanting parable on this theme. The princess Beauty symbolizes the human psyche, and the wicked witch who curses the infant at birth represents the process of early conditioning, which brings about oblivious, unawakened consciousness. Personality and body consciousness are steeped in narcotic oblivion and remain that way until the prince, who is the awakener, arrives, and everything comes alive. The prince is the royal self, the higher self, the one whose kiss or touch awakens us.

A family had a new baby boy and his sister, a girl of four years old. After the baby was born, the little girl asked her parents if she could be left alone with the baby for a little while.

Concerned that she might be jealous of the baby and possibly even hurt him, the parents finally told the little girl that she could go into the nursery by herself. Their plan was to listen in on the monitor.

The little girl went in, closed the door, walked up to the crib, looked in, and said, “Tell me about God, baby. I’m beginning to forget.”
The teachings of transformation from many cultures and religions agree in pointing out the sleeplike nature of our ordinary consciousness, and they share the popular belief that all of us are pursuing dreams – of honor, wealth, pleasure, happiness. The teachers of spiritual transformation take the analogy one step further and say it is possible and desirable – even necessary – to awaken from these dreams.

> There is no reality in a dream, and yet, while one dreams, one believes in the reality of the things one sees in the dream. After one wakes up one recognizes the falseness of the dream and laughs at oneself. Just so, in the dream state of fettered existence a man has a belief in things which do not exist. But when he has found the Path, then, at the moment of enlightenment he understands that there is no reality in them and he laughs at himself. Man, by the force of the dream state resulting from ignorance, believes in the existence of all sorts of things which do not exist, such as I and mine, male and female, etc.
> (Nagarjuna, 2nd century Buddhist philosopher)

Just as the awakening from a terrifying nightmare is marked by a sense of relief, even an ecstatic feeling of liberation, so the transition from ordinary, conditioned consciousness to awakened consciousness is often exhilarating and joyous, marked by a sense of healing taking place, a peaceful resolution of inner conflicts, and an upsurge of creative inspiration.

> One is aware of pleasure and pain, birth and death, disease and grief, as long as one is identified with the body. All these belong to the body alone and not to the Self. Attaining self-knowledge, one looks on pleasure and pain, birth and death, as a dream.
> (Ramakrishna)

When we awaken in a spiritual sense, we become aware of something, a central core being, that is always unchangingly present and fully pervasive throughout our psyche. This is Essence, the Self that is immortal and omnipresent. When we are awake, we are more aware of our inner world and our external world.

Thus, the metaphor of awakening relates to the idea of coming alive from a deathlike sleeplike consciousness to a unitive, nonjudgmental awareness of the true inner spirit.

> The whole world is in deep slumber; and we, too, are asleep; How can one who himself is asleep wake us up?
> (Guru Arjan)
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

The Master tries to pull us out of our deep slumber. In compassion, He shows us the way to freedom. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/dsos.htm)

The Masters come to our help, to awaken us from this long slumber of ignorance. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/wayof.htm)

…it is in the company of the truly awakened soul that one awakens from one's long slumber. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/col/col-3a.htm)

Just as a father is moved by the pitiable condition of his son and advises him out of sheer compassion, similar is the case with our heavenly Father. He assumes the garb of a Saint and awakens the sleeping humanity out of the deep slumber. Then He tells us that every moment of our precious human birth is being wasted in the transitory charms of the world. We should safeguard ourselves from this grand delusion. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/thinkofdeath.htm)

Kabir further says, "I tell the people to wake up from their slumber." It means that we are asleep. But how? The fact is that we are asleep as regards the Reality that is within, because our inner eye has not yet been opened and we have not witnessed the Light of God. We have never risen above the body consciousness, never developed the "single eye" that alone pierces into the Beyond. We are, as it were, asleep from within, and are identified with our bodies and the bodily impressions. We are leading a superficial life on the sensual plane. It is because of this that Kabir asks us to wake up from the deadly spell of the senses. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/natural.htm)

We are, as it were, asleep. All Masters tell us the same thing. How are we asleep? The attention, which is the outcome of our own souls, is engaged in the outside things - identified with them. Unless that attention is withdrawn from outside, we are awake outside, but asleep from within. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/spiritualism.htm)

Now, a man who is fast asleep never dreams of awakening. Who can awaken any man who is fast asleep? You'll say, "The man who is awake." He will shake you up, and in a loud voice say, "Wake up!" And you can awaken. What is meant by that? Those who are awakened have risen above body-consciousness. They are not identified with the outside things, but they make the best use of the things at their disposal. They shake us first by theory and then by attention: They raise us up; they have the competency to raise our souls out of the deep sleep that we are in. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/spiritualism.htm)
An awakening which does not awaken the sleeper to love has aroused him in vain. (Jessamyn)

The greatest part of mankind may be said to be asleep, and that particular way of life which takes up each man’s mind, thoughts and actions, may be very well called his particular dream. (William Law)

To those who are awake, there is one ordered universe, whereas in sleep each person turns away from the world to one of his own. (Heraclitus)

O my blessed beloved, awake! Why do you sleep in ignorance? (Kabir)

He who dreams must be awakened, and the deeper the man is who slumbers, or the deeper he slumbers, the more important it is that he be awakened, and the more powerfully must he be awakened. (Soren Kierkegaard)

You have not known what you are, you have slumbered upon yourself all your life...Whoever you are! Claim your own. (Walt Whitman)

The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred million to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive...We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical means, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn. (Henry David Thoreau)
2. Uncovering the Veils of Illusion

If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is: infinite.
(William Blake)

It is an ancient notion that the world perceived in our everyday consciousness is a shadow play of appearances, illusory and evanescent, and that the transformation of consciousness involves transcending or dissolving this web of images.

A magic spell, a dream, a gleam before the eyes,
A reflection, lightning, an echo, a rainbow,
Moonlight upon water, cloud-lands,
Dimness before the eyes, fog and apparitions,
These are the twelve analogies of the phenomenal.
(Naropa, 11th century Buddhist scholar & mystic)

The aspect of transformation symbolized in these images is related to the idea and the experience of discovery, which is “un-covering”; to disillusionment, which is “abandoning of illusions”; to revelation, which is “pulling back the veil” or “unveiling.”
It is also related to the experience of *insight*, as “inner sight,” or seeing that sees beneath the surface appearance; and to *enlightenment*, as an experience of more light, produced by the removal of obscuring veils or coverings.

The feeling of the self being “uncovered,” analogous to the peeling of the layers of an onion, is extremely common in the deeper transformative experiences…Ordinary human consciousness is viewed as obstructed, blind, unconscious, a play of illusions (maya). Genuine consciousness is possible, but only through meditative practices.

The Indian philosopher-seers used the concept of maya to refer to the illusory, evanescent quality of the phenomenal world. Maya is usually translated as “illusion,” because of the insistence that only Absolute Beingness is real.

Shankara tells us we “superimpose” our concepts of space, time, and material objects onto the external world, when actually there is only unchanging, infinite Beingness.

*Our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different…No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded.*

(William James)
A well known variant of the theme of illusion and reality is Plato’s allegory of the cave: we human beings are like prisoners chained to the wall of a dark cave, in which fires cast flickering shadows on the walls – and we identify these shadows as the events and phenomena of the real world. Outside the cave, there is the lighted world illumined by the daytime sun, but when one of us prisoners manages to break free from our chains, he or she is dazzled by the great radiance and only then realizes that what has ordinarily been taken for real is a play of shadows.

Here, as always, the transformation of consciousness involves a radical restructuring of our mode of perception: as we awaken, we recognize we have been asleep; as we see clearly, we realize that we have been fascinated by the illusion of images.

William James writes: “In conversion or religious regeneration,…a not infrequent consequence of the change operated in the subject is a transfiguration of the face of nature in his eyes. A new heaven seems to shine upon a new earth.” Everything we look at in such states seems illuminated with a kind of pristine, luminous beauty, comparable to the light of a new day dawning.

_It was like entering into another world, a new state of existence. Natural objects were glorified. My spiritual vision was so clarified that I saw beauty in every material object in the universe. The woods were vocal with heavenly music. Oh, how I was changed! Everything became new. My horses and hogs and everybody became changed! When I went in the morning into the fields to work the glory of God appeared in all His visible creation. I well remember we reaped oats, and how every straw and head of the oats seemed, as it were, arrayed in a kind of rainbow glory, or to glow, if I may so express it, in the glory of God._

(Starbuck)
In some writings, the transformation of vision involved in spiritual transformation has been described as a change from outer to inner focus, from the material world of the senses to the spiritual worlds revealed by inner sight.

In the Indian yoga teachings, we find the concept of the “third eye”, the eye of contemplation, by which we know transcendent, spiritual realities.

At the time of Initiation, the aspirant sees the real Light within him, whereas normally the inner eye is covered by a thick veil of darkness. ... Man has an inner eye with which he can see within himself all the higher regions, when the veil is rent asunder by a competent living Master.

(Sant Kirpal Singh, ruhanisatsangusa.org/knowthy.htm)

By concentration a feeling of numbness gradually creeps up on the hands and feet and spreads on to the rest of the body until the sensory current gets focused on the center of the soul behind the two eyebrows (from whence during wakefulness it proceeds). The concentrated energy then falls back upon the veil behind the eyes which is rent asunder, opening a brilliant vista ahead. The sun and moon in turn appear with a melodious Sound Current emerging from beyond. These unbroken strains of music continue of their own accord. When this stage is reached an aspirant has nothing more to do except to be absorbed in them.

(Sant Kirpal Singh, ruhanisatsangusa.org/simran.htm)
The perceptual experience of piercing or removing a veil is like traversing a kind of threshold or boundary region between planes of consciousness. Ancient teachings held that each human being has many bodies, or forms, separated from one another by “veils,” “curtains,” or “skins.” Birth, or incarnation, involves taking on bodies, clothes, or skins – the Self or Spirit becomes embodied.

During the incarnational descent into form, we take on one after another of these veils. In an extraordinary passage written by an Islamic Rafa’I dervish, we find the incarnational descent described as a passage through seventy thousand veils:

*Seventy thousand veils separate Allah, the One Reality, from the world of matter and sense. And every soul passes before his birth through these seventy thousand. The inner half of these are veils of light; the outer half veils of darkness...Thus the child is born weeping, for the soul knows its separation from Allah, the One Reality...The passage through the veils has brought with it forgetfulness...He is now, as it were, in prison in his body, separated by these thick curtains from Allah.*

There are veils under veils - physical, then the astral, then the causal. And you are at the back of it.
(Sant Kirpal Singh, ruhanisatsangusa.org/lok/noworld.htm)

_Between God and spirit, there is no other obstacle but that of a veil of the mind._
_If this veil were to stop fluttering in the breeze of desires, as it does at present, the spirit can take in directly the Cosmic Energy from its very source._
(Sant Kirpal Singh, ruhanisatsangusa.org/gemsq.htm)
The journey to God is always experienced as an uncovering, a removal of veils. Meister Eckhart refers to this ascending, evolutionary transformation in the following passage:

_In being lifted up, the soul is made naked before the idea of God, for God’s begetting; the image of God is unveiled and free in the open soul._

Ignorance and lack of understanding are always symbolized by blindness, deafness, or clouded or covered thinking. Insight, true perception, and spiritual awareness are experienced as unveiling, re-vealing, dis-covering, dis-illusionment.

Turning inward, toward the Lord, the Spirit, brings about the ascent through the dimensions, the experience of transcendent reality, with vision of the inner domains and subtle body sheaths. It also brings about the unmasking of the persona, the dissolving of conditioned self-images.

As the eye is unveiled, the I is transformed.

_Know this world to be an absorbing dream. In a moment it will vanish. Believe this._

(Guru Teg Bahadur)
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

It is this veil of ignorance which has come in between the soul and the Over-soul that has to be removed to enable the soul to come into its own, to realize its inherent nature and then to seek its real home and gain life eternal.…. How to remove the veil of ignorance is the problem of problems. We have allowed it to grow into an impervious rock too hard to be blasted. Still, the sages have provided various means to rend the otherwise impenetrable veil, such as Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga and other methods. (The Crown of Life, ruhanisatsangusa.org/cot/cot-1.htm

According to Nature's law of life, a man (the embodied or incarnate soul) is like a precious jewel clothed in three caskets or bodies - the physical, the astral or mental, and the causal or the seed-body - all of which, more or less, partake of the terrestrial character, with varying degrees of density. These are like outer robes of coat, vest under it, and then shirt. When a man casts off the physical body, his spirit still is wearing the astral or the mental body. He has also the causal or the ethereal seed body or thin veil under the astral raiment. Until one is able to cast off the physical body, he cannot reach the first heaven, the astral kingdom within. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/wol/wol_ii.htm

Whoever is competent to remove that veil of darkness and reveal the Light and Sound Principle within--the two aspects of God-in-expression--can truly be known as a Guru. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/iamthine.htm

Spirituality is a practical subject that can only be learned and practiced with the aid and guidance of a practical teacher who has for himself made an experiment with the Spirit and Power of God in the laboratory of his own body and mind, by unveiling one by one the coverings hiding Reality in him. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/guru-means.htm

All the founders of the various religions in the world are one on this point. We have been gifted with inner perception and audition, independent of the sense organs; for perfect knowledge is an action of the soul. The soul is, however, smothered under the deadweight of mind and matter for myriads of ages, and has never had an opportunity of attending to the Divine Light and the celestial strains of the Inner Music. A Master-Saint helps in lifting the karmic burden and thereby releases the soul, freeing it gradually from the various enveloping koshas or enshrouding veils and different limiting adjuncts until it comes to its own, disengaged of the love of all created things and becomes a disembodied soul, shining in its own luminosity and capable of thinking and acting independently on its own. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/indian/sant_kirpal_singh/true_master_and_his_mission.htm

The whole world is in the ignorance of illusion or Maya…. To forget is delusion, or what is called Maya. If you go to somebody whose eye is open, even if you speak ill of Him, He still tries to bring you out of the abyss of ignorance. If He gives you something, you should develop it. When you see inside, your whole angle of vision will be changed. Even outside you will see that it is all the manifestation of God. It is so, and when we meet a Master we begin to see that it is all His manifestation. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/mt/bhakti-devotion.htm)
3. From Captivity to Liberation

The world is a prison and we are the prisoners: dig a hole in the prison wall and let yourself out!
(Rumi)

Escape from prison has been one of the most consistent metaphors for the process of human transformation, both in the myths and texts of the ancients and in the psychological writings of modern thinkers. Liberation from the bonds of karma, escape from the ceaseless round of samsara (existence), freedom from the snares of illusion, deliverance from the clutches of sin – these are but some of the traditional expressions that allude to this aspect of transformation.

Plato’s famous parable of the cave incorporates a metaphor of both illusory perception and imprisonment. Humans are compared to prisoners chained to the wall of a dark cave, watching with fascination the illusory flickering shadows cast by fires on the stone walls of the cave. This metaphor tells us that our illusory perception of the world is based on our being attached, tied to the rock wall, which is the material world.

The imagery of the material world as a prison appears emphatically in Gnostic texts as well as in the writings of Neoplatonist philosophers and medieval Christian mystics. For these philosophers, the world in general and the body in particular constitute a fortress, a dungeon, a tomb, a garment of chains – a condition marked by weight, cold, and immobility.
Many mythic and religious writings contain the metaphor of bodily form as inherently a cave, a dungeon, a trap, or a labyrinth. To some people such a notion might seem like the life-negating delusion of melancholy existentialists or masochistic ascetics. We might prefer to think of the body as an instrument for work, creativity, and play in the “real world,” or we might think of it as our medium for the experience of hedonistic delight and pleasure, or conceive of it as a temple for divine spirit. Indeed, this last image is often given in various mystical and sacred texts as a state or attitude to which we should aspire.

Yet when we are in the “grip” of a disease or “racked” with pain, the imagery of the body as captivity or a crippling limitation seems only too real. Our awareness is contracted, reduced to the area of pain or illness, we can’t move or breathe properly; we feel weak, debilitated, and frustrated. The writings and teachings of Buddhists and Gnostics, and those of other mystical traditions, are quite explicit on this subject: bodily life itself is equivalent to imprisonment. From this point of view, illness and paralysis only intensify and exacerbate an already existing, “normal” captivity.

0 Son of dust! Hearken unto the mystic voice calling from the realm of the Invisible. 
Up from thy prison, ascend unto the glorious meadows above.  
And from thy mortal cage wing thy flight unto the Paradise of the Placeless.  
(Baha’u’llah, a mystic saint of Persia)

The three-fold path – the path of the world, the path of desires, and the path of scriptures, far from giving the knowledge of Reality, keep one perpetually bound in the prison-house of the Universe. Deliverance comes only when one frees himself from this iron chain.  
(Shankara)
One kind of experiential validation of the metaphor of the body as prison comes from what are known in parapsychology as out-of-body experiences. The consensus from people experiencing this phenomenon is that leaving the body is always experienced as a kind of flying or floating, a release and freedom from the usual physical limitations. Similarly, the consensus about the experience of returning to the body is that it always feels like coming into a more limited, bound, heavy, immobile state.

Gurdjieff’s view is that the single most important prerequisite for escaping from the prison is awakening to the realization of our current condition:

_You do not realize your own situation. You are in prison. All you can wish for, if you are a sensible man, is to escape. But how to escape?...If a man is at any time to have a chance of escape, then he must first of all realize that he is in prison. So long as he fails to realize this, so long as he thinks he is free, he has no chance whatsoever._

_We are caught in the prison of the mind. If we are to escape we must recognize that we are in prison. If we think we are free, then no escape is possible._

(Gurdjieff)
Closely related to the need for awakening to one’s situation is the factor of intention: we must want to escape, will it, desire it, long for it. In any kind of psychological work or exploration of altered states of consciousness, the importance of mental set – intention – has long been recognized. While intention by itself may not be sufficient – since the road to hell is proverbially paved with good intentions – techniques and methods practiced without clear and strong intention are probably going to be ineffective. To quote Gurdjieff again, “If liberation is possible, it is possible only as a result of great efforts, and above all, of conscious efforts toward a definite aim.”

As the traditional texts tell us, we can, through transcendence, attain release from the bondage of material existence. Using techniques of consciousness alteration, such as meditation, we can rise up out of the “vale of tears,” the dungeon of samsara.

Guidance is essential for liberation: one can only escape from prison with the help of one who has escaped before. Human beings have ever prayed to their gods and goddesses, their teachers and guides, for help in delivering them from the snares and traps of the enemies of life. And the liberation, the deliverance into peace, the release of the imprisoned splendor has been most generously aided and facilitated.
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

We are the soul, in human form: all-consciousness, having a physical covering. In this human form we can realize God, but only when we first come to know ourselves. As long as we do not know who we are, we cannot comprehend what God is. Just consider that this body is the temple of God, and it maintains its glory while the soul is in it; but we are imprisoned in the body - imprisoned! (ruhanisatsangusa.org/bondage.htm)

Maulana Rumi Sahib has said that this human form is a prison and we are all prisoners; that the body is alive, but we are the Life; and that we should make a hole in the top of the prison and climb out! He is referring to the nine holes in the body and the tenth that lies hidden in between and behind the two eyebrows to where the soul withdraws at the time of death. These Masters desire us to know that this is the only way out of the body to realize the true bliss. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/bondage.htm)

Through the great forgetfulness, we are entrapped in attachment and cannot find any way out. Such a heavy imprisonment - first the world, and then this body! (ruhanisatsangusa.org/bondage.htm)

We think that the day we come into this world is our birth. In truth, it is a day of congratulations for those souls who have risen from the lower species to the human birth, but for those who come from a higher circle, birth into the world is like entering a prison. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/birthday.htm)

I have seen a vision of souls about to be shut up in bodies. Some of them wailed and moaned. Some struggled against their doom, like noble beasts caught by crafty hunters and dragged away from their home.

One shrieked, “How cruel it is that we are being torn away from our celestial splendor! We are to be expelled from this holy atmosphere and from the blissful life we live here, to be imprisoned in a mean and sorry place. What hard necessities wait for us? What hateful thing will we have to do to meet the needs of a body that will quickly perish?” (Hermes)
When a man is born, he enters a closely guarded prison; but the people around the child rejoice. The poor soul has entered a prison and everyone is happy about it! If only the soul, while living in this human form, would learn to rise above its prison of illusion, it would gain awareness and see the whole picture in its true perspective. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/worldplay.htm)

We are confined in a prison with nine doors! Forgive me, but can you tell me if this is a birth or a prison? When we release ourselves from these nine doors, that is indeed a birth. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/birthday.htm)

While living in the world, he (the Satguru) is not of the world, nor is he a prisoner in the prison of the body, as we are. He is a free entity and at will crosses over into spiritual realms and is competent to grant this power and capacity to thousands of jivas, if he so wishes. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/godman/godman_25.htm)

This earth plane is a vast prison house. It is not the true abode of the virgin soul. It is here temporarily till it gets reconciled to the Divine Consort and is called back from the forced exile here. Whenever a soul in an alien land feels the pangs of separation, God plans a way out through a God-realized Saint, a Saint who is filled with the unseen Power of God, a living embodiment of the Divine Word. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/indian/sant_kirpal_singh/true_master_and_his_mission.htm)

So Masters always say there is no other way for you to come out of this net of outgoing faculties. You are being dragged; you cannot do it; only some Power can take you up, drag you up. You are in a prison house; all the doors are locked; you cannot run out of it. The only way is to break the lock and go out. This is what Masters help you to do; this is your real work. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/nothome.htm)

You are under a great delusion: come out of it - know thyself. How to know thyself? We are already imprisoned, you see. Bound on all sides we cannot go up; so God sends you some help. He brings you in contact with someone who can take you up. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/nothome.htm)

Maulana Rumi referred to the world as a prison, and we are the prisoners occupying it. It is an inducement to take action, to get out - but how can we escape? Metaphorically, we must escape through the roof. The way up is above - above the senses. Rise above. In the labyrinth of the outer world, there is nothing but wave upon wave of diffusion, dispersion of the attention - where will you go? The Master comes to expose this life of illusion, and to guide us out of it. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/strait.htm)

In due course when you grow in stature and develop this technique, you become the Master of the house, capable to command the mind and the senses to work or not to work as you may desire. But now the indweller in you is an abject slave in his own house, a love prisoner in the citadel, chained hand and foot like a king on a chessboard, susceptible to every gust of wind that blows, bouncing from place to place with no roots anywhere. In the swirling waters of life, we are floating like seaweed with no roots inside on which to hold. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/guru-means.htm)
Wherever the Truth works in full power, the negative power will also work in full force against it. He does not want his prisoners to escape his clutches; but regardless, the Satguru goes on distributing the wealth without concern. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/tghp.htm)

Masters free the attention from the prison of mind and senses and rejoin that attention or soul to its Source. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/ramayana.htm)

We are in fact in a prison. The house is on fire. Man should not ask who has set the fire to the house. It is better to get out of the house and then inquire. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/lok/veryfew.htm)

As long as we remain with the body, the body is glorified, but we are prisoners within it, and remain so until we are released by the Controlling Power. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/pdf/Teachings.pdf)

To be in tune with the Music of the Soul is to cut asunder and to sunder forever the knots which at present bind the material body with the conscious soul, imprisoned in the body with countless fetters. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/pdf/Teachings.pdf)

We should go to the Satguru and plead to Him to take us out of here – “He has the love, and we are prisoners – He also has come as a prisoner, just for our sakes – He put on this bag of filth, this human form, just to release us. O Satguru, if you do not help us, then who can?”  
(ruhanisatsangusa.org/pdf/Teachings.pdf)
4. From Fragmentation to Wholeness

When the ten thousand things are viewed in their oneness, we return to the origin and remain where we have always been. (Zen Master Sengstan)

One of the major themes in the literature on the transformation of consciousness is the notion that the disjointed, separated, fragmented parts of the psyche can be and need to be synthesized into a harmonious, integrated whole. An initial condition of confusion, disorder, and chaos gradually gives way to a state where we are functioning from a clear center within ourselves. In this state, the different parts or aspects of our psychological and physical totality are functionally coordinated and unified. William James spoke of “the divided self and the process of its unification.”

The English words whole, wholesome, and wholeness are derived from the Old English hal, which means “sound,” “complete,” and “healthy.” So wholeness, in the sense of integration, overlaps considerably with the concept of health. We might say that health is whole, complete functioning. Furthermore, the English word holy and the German heilig also derive from the same root. Thus health, wholeness, and holiness are all associated with the fundamental underlying concept of integration and togetherness, which is contrasted with its polar opposite of dispersion, scattering, and fragmentation.
This metaphor is related to the notion of opposites and their reconciliation. From the many to the one, from duality to unity – the direction of growth and evolution is toward integration, toward oneness.

A further crucial point here is that separation or dissociation in the psyche is regarded as an inevitable and necessary consequence of incarnation, just as imprisonment is. A human being’s nature is originally one, single, whole, and unified with God. Through entry into the world of form, however – through embodiment – we become involved with multiplicity. In the core of our being we are singular and unified; at the surface of our interactions with the world, we are multiple and dispersed. In transformation we seek to recover that original unity.

This treasure of the Kingdom of God has been hidden by time and multiplicity...and by creaturely nature. But in the measure that the soul can separate itself from this multiplicity, to that extent it reveals within itself the Kingdom of God.

(Meister Eckhart)

Now in all of us, however constituted,...does the normal evolution of character chiefly consist in the straightening out and unifying of the inner self. The higher and the lower feelings, the useful and the erring impulses, begin by being a comparative chaos within us – they must end by forming a stable system of functions in right subordination.

(William James)

Some have suggested the apt metaphor of the self as a kind of orchestra with many different parts playing together. The task of transformation, then, is to attune and harmonize the different musicians and instruments of the personality.
There are three major keys to what could be called the strategy of transformative reintegration. The first point is that we must recognize the fact of scattering and dissociation in ordinary consciousness and everyday life.

The second major aspect of an integrative strategy is that we need to focus intention toward transformative integration, just as we need to focus intention toward awakening, toward realization, toward liberation, and toward purification. It is this aware intention of transformation that makes painful experiences of psychic disintegration, or of being trapped, confused, bound or poisoned, bearable.

With this metaphor of fragmentation to wholeness we see the practice of intentional discriminative wisdom as a prelude to deeper healing integration.

A third major aspect of strategy, common to all the transformation processes is the necessity of an inward orientation. We get scattered into multiplicity because our attention is directed toward outer things and events in an imbalanced manner; whereas by turning within, we find the single source of wholeness.

> The difficulties in the Path can be overcome only if the aspirant has one-pointedness. If his psychic energies are dissipated in worldly pursuits, the progress he makes is very slow. One-pointedness implies dispassion concerning all the allurements of the phenomenal world. The mind must turn away from all temptations and complete control be established over the senses. Hence control and dispassion are both necessary to attain one-pointedness in the search for true understanding.

(Meher Baba)

As we recognize that the fragmentation to which we are subject is due to a disconnection from the source of our life, the immortal self, it follows that our path to wholeness must involve a “re-membering” of that Self.
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

So decide from today onward, you see – decide what is your aim in life. We are adrift, aimlessly adrift; the result is we are just starting this way, some days ahead, some days back. We dig so many ditches in the earth, some five feet, some seven feet, some four feet. Water nowhere! (ruhanisatsangusa.org/pdf/Teachings.pdf)

Your attention is divided in so many ways. It is just like a pipe that has so many holes. When the water flows through the pipe it will ooze out from each hole drop by drop. If you close all the holes except one, the water will shoot forth. So if our love, which is now divided into so many things, is withdrawn from outside and only one avenue is left, to God or the God-in-man, naturally it will shoot forth. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/pdf/Teachings.pdf)

Is God first or is world first? We take world first and God to help us in the world, that's all. Everybody must decide what he wants to do. We are adrift. Sometimes we want God, sometimes the world. So decide first what you want to do. Sometimes I tell people, "Decide what you want to do from this day on." You must have something before you; and work. Work for it, maybe only a step is taken but it will take you closer to the goal. Sometimes you are running like a hare, then sleeping, then again turning your head some other way. It's better to go regularly like a tortoise, step by step, step by step, every day, not turning but going ahead. So you are on the way. God is waiting for you, each one of you. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/lok/firstsee.htm)

With continued spiritual progress toward inner development, outer things become less disturbing. Remember, events come and go. Inner development as it progresses will gradually eclipse the physical temptations. One begins to do things in order to carry on with the higher ideal always before him or her, the fulfillment of which becomes an all-absorbing vocation in one’s life. Such things as are conducive to higher progress become joyful. (Spiritual Elixir, 160)

…an awakened person has a ruling passion for God alone. All things work to the good of those who win the love of God. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/search4truth.htm)

If you have love for somebody who is sitting in the throng, even with so many hundreds of people there, your attention is riveted on him. You don't know who else is sitting. There's ruling passion in your heart for Him. That is due to extreme concentration, real renunciation. What is real renunciation? When you renounce all other things except for One, that is renunciation, not leaving your hearth and home. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/lok/prayer.htm)

Please remember that the heart which is stirred by this awakening for inner life gradually begins to yearn for it; and this yearning in course of time assumes the form of a ruling passion, so much so that day and night he piteously cries for it until God, the great Ocean of Mercy, is stirred to His very depths and draws him to Himself. This then is the power of a prayer coming out of the depths of the heart. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/indian/sant_kirpal_singh/true_master_and_his_mission.htm)
5. Reconciling with the Inner Enemy

My foes - desire, hatred, and their kindred - are without hands, without feet. They are neither cunning nor valiant. How do they enslave me? They dwell in my spirit, and there at their ease they smite me. I will never turn back from fighting them. I make war on them all.

(Shantideva)

The shadow, the id, the beast, the devil, the monster, the adversary – these are some of the many names assigned to a psychological complex that is present, more or less, in all human beings. We can regard it as a kind of psychic image or entity that functions as an inner opponent, our opposite, with whom we struggle and argue as we live our lives. To reconcile this opposition is regarded as a central transformational challenge on the path to wholeness.

The task of transformation in relation to these opposing dualities is integration: bringing about a coming together, a co-existence, of the opposites. The self and its shadow must come to terms. We must make friends with the inner enemy. Or, if not friends, then at least and at first, we must get to know the inner adversary.

What is the demon? Your own mind. It is not outside, this demon is inside; that complicates the battle. You have to go into yourself.

(Chidananda)
Throughout history, human beings have experienced the complex of evil, bad, or wrong in many different ways. A common thread is a recognition, a sense, that something has gone wrong: there is a mistake, or something horrible or uncanny has occurred, something that is a threat to ordinary settled reality. This wrong, or deviation, must be corrected or dealt with in some way. Demons, monsters, devils, and malevolent spirits are the traditional mythic and religious personifications of this experience. The Freudian id and the Jungian shadow are contemporary psychological metaphors that point to the hidden, dark, negative side of our nature.

When we label a behavior as “bad” or “evil” we are making a judgment that suggests that something is useless, worthless, inferior – to be ignored, eliminated, or possibly changed and made “better.”

We may experience the conflict between good and evil tendencies in our nature as a kind of struggle between yes and no, between yea-saying and nay-saying. A part of us affirms and another part denies. Freud identified this struggle between yes and no tendencies as the struggle between the animalistic id and the rational human ego.

In the most basic terms, the word no sets a limit; it defines a situation. Any form or pattern has a limit or boundary. That boundary says no to a further expansion of the process within that form. So the no is necessary for setting a limit to the yes. In the struggle between the two, we experience the chronic split in our nature.
In some of our experience the duality and opposition between good and evil is felt as a defensive stand-off, a separation, a gulf, a rejection. We want to separate from that in us which we feel is rotten.

In other phases of our experience there is a more active struggle or conflict going on. We may love and hate simultaneously, or feel both attraction and aversion toward the same object or person. We may be in turmoil as our fears and inhibitions struggle with impulses of lust or aggression.

The Temptation of Saint Anthony; Delaroche – 1832

The task of personal transformation is to turn this inner warfare to inner peace. We need to come to terms with the “enemies,” both inner and outer. The clashing opposites must be reconciled. Forces, tendencies, and impulses that are locked in seemingly endless conflict must learn to co-exists.

For transformation to take place, we need to learn to become wise, impartial judges of ourselves, not punitive, vindictive judges. And we need start by realizing that the opposing enemies are all within us: we are both judge and accused, both jailor and prisoner, both executioner and condemned.
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

The Negative Power, Kal, represents the power that is going into expression, bringing all creation into being, and the other, Positive Power represents the power of inversion, bringing the soul back to its Source. These then are the centrifugal and centripetal powers working in all creation. Mind is an agent of the Negative Power and always brings one into the outer world. (Spiritual Elixir, 20)

Swami Ji has said that we should not hesitate to go all out to still the mind. We do not fully grasp that the mind takes everyone to his doom. It is like a thousand-faced snake, which is constantly with each being; it has a thousand different ways of destroying the person. The rich with riches, the poor with poverty, the orator with his fine speeches – it takes the weakness in each and plays upon it to destroy him. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/serpent.htm)

So mind is a disciple of the Negative Power, you see. It is working to take you away from the Path, from God. (The Teachings of Kirpal Singh, v.1, 82)

…mind is material, it will always drag you to the material things. (The Light of Kirpal, 198)

If at every moment you are consciously watching your behavior, a calm consideration will replace a blind instinctive reaction to certain situations in life where the choice lies between committing a lapse in behavior or avoiding it. (The Teachings of Kirpal Singh, v. 2, 19)

One way of pleasing the Master is to live up to what the Master says without regard to what your mind says or what your heart likes. (Portrait of Perfection, 25)

It is not you who are to control the mind. It is that Power within you. (The Light of Kirpal, 131)

Mind is accustomed to roam about externally through ages. Unless it is offered something more joyous within, it cannot be controlled. (The Teachings of Kirpal Singh, v.1, 8)

You enjoy outside and unless you get more blissful enjoyment inside you cannot withdraw from outside. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/lok/first see.htm)

The mind is a lover of enjoyments, and in the Naam there is the Maha Ras - the most delectable Nectar one can ever taste. If only the mind would take one true sip, it would never again yearn for lower enjoyments. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/listen.htm)

One cannot possibly forsake the lusts of the flesh unless one comes to know by actual contrast, the real happiness in the life of the spirit which comes about by communion with the holy Word. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/guru-means.htm)
The mind is the most powerful, clever, and cunning of enemies. (Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems, 282)

Our mind, we should never forget, is Satan incarnate, and an inveterate enemy of the soul. It does not wish the soul to gain emancipation from its overlordship, and does everything it can to prevent this. In other words, you may call it an imp of Satan – an active agent through which Lucifer spreads mischief and trouble. (Sawan Singh, Discourses on Sant Mat, 266)

While we sojourn in this dark region of matter, we have to deal with the negative power. With him we must contend in our struggles for spiritual freedom. It is his duty to try to hold us here, while it is our duty to try to escape. The resulting struggle purges us and makes us strong, and fits us for our homeward journey. This everlasting fight, this struggle in a welter of pain and blood and heart cries, is designed by the supreme Father to purge us and make us clean, ready for our homeward ascent. Let us never become discouraged. All of this is designed by the Father for our benefit. It is much as if one enters a gymnasium to take exercise. If we meet these difficulties in the right spirit, we shall greatly profit by them. The idea of pain and struggle is to purge us and inspire in us a longing to rise above the regions of pain and shadow. (Julian Johnson, The Path of the Masters, 259)

Life is a campaign against foes. It is a battle with obstacles, temptations, hardships and limitations. These foes are within man and so the battle has to be incessant and perpetual. (Sathya Sai Baba)

It is a man's own mind, not his enemy or foe, that lures him to evil ways. (Buddha)
6. On Dying and Being Reborn

So long as you do not have this dying and becoming, you’re only a gloomy guest on this darkening Earth.

(J. W. Goethe)

To die and be reborn is a metaphor for the most radical and total transformation that consciousness and identity can undergo. When our self-image or self-concept, the sense of identity with which (and as which) we have lived, comes to an end, then we feel as though the ego or self is dying. The pattern of this transformation metaphor is as follows: what I call “me” is finished and dying; then, after a period of turmoil and uncertainty, there is the “rebirth” of a new identity, a new sense of who “I” am. The transformation involves all aspects of the psyche, because it involves the central organizing principle of selfhood. The new self that is born is naturally of a childlike nature, filled with the wonder, joy, and spontaneity of childhood.

The rebirth experience, to be authentic, must of necessity be preceded by an experience of metaphorically dying. This first, dying phase is inevitably anxiety provoking and problematical for most people. As William Bridges has pointed out, any kind of ending, whether that of a career, a relationship, or a project, is a kind of dying. As a culture, we do not handle deathlike endings very well.

All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter another.

(Anatole France)
In the mystical literature of Eastern and Western cultures, we find many descriptions of death-rebirth experiences. Furthermore, they are seen as something to cultivate and practice. A saying of Zen master Bunan goes, “While living, be a dead man, thoroughly dead; whatever you do then, as you will, is always good.” Death-rebirth experiences, though painful, are highly valued because they lead to increased understanding, peace, and inner freedom from fear.

You know from experience that the path is not an easy one.  
It is death in life - a living death.  
(Sawan Singh, The Dawn of Light, 169)

Many of the descriptions of the ultimate state of consciousness to be attained on the disciplined path of self-transcendence and transformation are indicative of a kind of ego annihilation, a total dying of the self and all its normal identifications. The end state of Buddhist meditation, nirvana, means “extinction,” a “passing away” of the flames of desire and attachment. The Islamic Sufi’s ultimate state of fana is likewise a “dissolution,” a merging of individual identity into union with universal beingness. In a magnificent poem by Rumi, the great thirteenth-century Persian poet-sage, our dying is seen as a repeated phase in a cosmic evolutionary process:

I died a mineral, and became a plant.  
I died a plant, and rose an animal.  
I died an animal and I was a man.  
Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?  
Yet once more I shall die as man.  
O let me not exist – for non-existence  
Proclaims in organ tones,  
“To Him we shall return.”

Every time something ends in us, it dies: thus we experience thousands of little deaths each day, each hour. Thoughts arise, die, arise again; images form, dissolve, form again; feelings well up from within, crest and recede, to emerge again later. Insofar as we are identified with these thoughts, images, and feelings, we die, are reborn, die again, are reborn, continuously.

Rumi said that “every instant you are dying and returning.” The German theologian and mystic Johannes Tauler spoke of the great value of such daily dying: “A man might die a thousand deaths in one day and find a joyful life corresponding to each of them.” Anyone who has ever had the experience of letting go of some craving or attachment and has felt the sudden lift, the ecstatic freedom that comes from this, will know the truth of these statements.
Tauler goes on to speak of the special value of consciously dying “to a scornful word, to some inclination, acting or not acting against one’s own will, in love or grief, in word or act, in going or staying.” In other words, inclinations, impulses, desires, wishes, judgments – all these are born and die within the psyche.

Gurdjieff’s statement on the importance of consciously dying, intentionally letting go of false identifications, is characteristically forceful and vivid:

*A man must die, that is, he must free himself from a thousand petty attachments and identifications…He is attached to everything in his life, attached to his imaginations, attached to his stupidity, attached even to his sufferings, possibly to his sufferings more than to anything else…Attachments to things, identifications with things, keep alive a thousand useless I’s in a man. These I’s must die in order that the big I may be born. But how can they be made to die? They do not want to die. It is at this point that the possibility of awakening comes to the rescue.*

We know that from two to three million of our cells die each second, while equal numbers are being born. At this level, then, there is no possibility of attachment to the individual life form. Cells live out their life span in periods ranging from several days to several months, and within seven years or so, all the cells in our body have died and been replaced. Yet we have retained our life, and the awareness of our identity, beyond all of these countless lives and deaths.
The new being that arises and grows after the death of the old self has been called the “fetus of immortality.” From the intentional, conscious “dying,” involving the release of past identifications, a new and wiser being arises and grows in us.

This rebirth phase of the transformation may be experienced in several different ways. First, there is resurrection. An example of this experience is in suffering a near-fatal illness and then recovering – the body appears to be fully restored to health.

Alternatively, a rebirth as self-realization is the replacement of the small self by the greater Self or Spirit. In this kind of rebirth, the little self is overshadowed or replaced by the great Self, the personal body-ego by the transpersonal Spirit, the mortal by the Immortal. A Sufi saint wrote, “Thy being dies away, and His person covers thy person.” People in such states feel their own ego concerns fade into insignificance in the face of the awesome power and light of the great Self, the God within.

Third, there is rebirth as renewal, where the one who has died, metaphorically, lives thereafter in a world renewed, a heightened state of consciousness. Some accounts of death-rebirth experiences emphasize the new quality of awareness and perception that comes into existence afterward. It is as if we have entered a new world, and a kind of pristine, shining radiance suffuses everything we perceive. The emotional response to what is perceived is also new; there is a quality of joy and freshness, an outpouring of affection and enthusiasm.
The fourth variant is rebirth experienced as the birth of the “radiant child”: this is the archetype of the divine or eternal child, which, as Jung points out, symbolizes “the potential future.” The biblical admonition that “except ye become as children, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven” follows naturally from the teaching that one needs to die before entering the blessed, enlightened state.

The divine child is invincible. He or she overcomes dangerous enemies in infancy: one of the images of the boy Krishna shows him trampling a giant serpent underfoot in a dance – a metaphor perhaps for the overcoming of reptilian instincts. An example from Greek mythology is the story of the baby Heracles, who strangled a serpent that attacked him in his crib. The radiant child has all the power of a god, since it is a god: it is the Immortal One that replaces the mortal personality that has “died.”

The Taoists emphasize the practical value, in terms of health and well-being, of attunement to the awareness of the infant.

*He who is filled with virtue is like a newborn child.*
*Wasps and bees will not sting him; Wild beasts will not fall upon him; He will not be attacked by birds of prey. His bones are soft, his muscles weak, But his grip is firm... He screams all day without becoming hoarse.*
*This is perfect harmony.*
For the individual in a process of transformation, the imagery and mythology of the eternal child fosters a positive and life-affirming attitude: we are encouraged to confront and transform our fear of death, to embrace the process of “dying” as liberating and as bringing wisdom. We thus come to know that out of the turmoil and darkness of dying comes the sparkling vitality of the newborn self. This new self is connected to the eternal source of all life, that source from which we all derive the divine essence within. It is hence aptly named “the eternal child.”

Each night, when I go to sleep, I die. And the next morning, when I wake up, I am reborn. (Mahatma Gandhi)

If you live in the dark a long time and the sun comes out, you do not cross into it whistling. There's an initial up-rush of relief at first, then - for me, anyway - a profound dislocation. My old assumptions about how the world works are buried, yet my new ones aren't yet operational. There's been a death of sorts, but without a few days in hell, no resurrection is possible. (Mary Karr)

We must always change, renew, rejuvenate ourselves; otherwise we harden. (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)
But the Phoenix is not remarkable for its feathers or flames. It is most revered for its ability to climb from its own funeral pyre, from the very ashes of its old charred body, as a brand new life ready to live again once more. Life after life, it goes through this cycle. It absorbs human sorrow, only to rise from death to do it all again. It never wearies, it never tires. It never questions its fate. Some say that the Phoenix is real, that it exists somewhere out there in the mountains of Arabia, elusive and mysterious. Others say that the Phoenix is only a wish made by desperate humans to believe in the continuance of life. But I know a secret. We are the Phoenix. (Courtney Cole)

Nature often holds up a mirror so we can see more clearly the ongoing processes of growth, renewal, and transformation in our lives. (Unknown)

The important thing is this: to be ready at any moment to sacrifice what you are for what you could become. (Charles DuBois)

So long as a person is capable of self-renewal they are a living being. (Henri-Frederic Amiel)

In the quest for Divine Bliss, there lingers subconsciously in the mind a certain apprehension: the fear of bereavement, of losing one’s old associations and familiar sense enjoyments; most of all, of losing one’s own self-identity. (Yogananda)

Change, even change for the better, is often approached with apprehension. In giving up something people think, “Will I be left with - nothing?” It takes courage to renounce the known for the unknown. It is not easy even to renounce a familiar pain for an unknown, and therefore uncertain, happiness. (Yogananda)

To become spiritual, you must die to self, and come alive in the Lord. Only then will the mysteries of God fall from your lips. To die to self through self-discipline causes suffering but brings you everlasting life. (Rumi)

He not busy being born is busy dying. (Bob Dylan)
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

Initiation from a Master-soul is of paramount importance, for herein lies the secret of all esoteric teachings and esoteric experience. It means a new birth and a new life, entirely in a new setting. This spiritual birth or birth in the Master is called a second birth, and enables a person to turn over a new leaf, to say goodbye to the past and march forward to this original Home, the long-forgotten paradise New Jerusalem, the Holy City, Muqam-i-Haq or Sach Khand….This initiation or introduction into the tenets of a new science is not something formal or by word of mouth only. Its significance is far deeper than is generally understood. It is tantamount to adopting an individual into the very life and spirit of the tenets that are introduced to him in theory. It is conveying a Life-impulse to the initiate and giving him firsthand experience of the source of life. It thus has a two-fold aspect: theoretical as well as practical. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/naam/naam-deeksha.htm)

They said you must be reborn. All Masters say the same thing. But we don't know what the meaning of being reborn is. Christ said, "Marvel not if I say, you must be reborn." Now people have forgotten. They simply interpret it as having certain forms and rites and rituals and believing in some Master; and that is to be reborn. Well, that is not so. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/nonew.htm)

We must be reborn. To be reborn is to rise into the Beyond. "Learn to die so that you may begin to live." (ruhanisatsangusa.org/integration.htm)

Our first birth is in the man-body; the second birth is that of being born anew into the Beyond when we learn to die while living. This birth is called the birth in Christ, birth in Guru-Power or birth in God-Power. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/godpower.htm)

This transcendence of the spirit from the senses is technically known in Sant Mat as death in life (self-annulling), and in the Vedantic terminology as self-analysis. Christ calls it second birth or birth anew, and Muslims term it as "dying before death." This immersion in God is true resurrection, or coming into new life. It is possible only through accepting the Path of any Master-soul -- which is none other than that of the Sound-current. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/swii/swii-X.htm)

All outgoing faculties can be made to stand still if you control your attention. This is what the Masters have always given out: Surat Yoga - the way of attention, of controlling the attention. The Masters give you an experience of how to withdraw, how to analyze yourself, how to rise above body-consciousness and how to be reborn: "Except ye be reborn, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of God." (ruhanisatsangusa.org/lust.htm)

This casting off or change may occur either through the final dissolution, the disintegrating process commonly known as death, or be brought about by the method of voluntary withdrawal of the sensory currents from the body technically known as "rising above body consciousness" by a process of inversion and self-analysis. The Gospels refer to this withdrawal as "to be born anew" or "resurrection." The Hindu scriptures speak of it as "twice-born." It is a birth of the spirit as distinct from that of the water… (ruhanisatsangusa.org/wol/wol_ii.htm)
According to the Bible, "Unless you are born anew, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." So to be born anew is to leave one's body and enter into the beyond—a transition from the physical to the astral plane. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/knowthy.htm)

When a spirit transcends the physical body and crosses over to the preliminary regions of stars, the sun and the moon, it comes face to face with the Luminous Form of the Master, and it is then said to have taken a second birth. From here the Master takes charge of the soul and takes it on from plane to plane. Christ, too, speaks of it as follows: "Unless you are born anew, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God." This is the Birth of the Spirit, as distinguished from the Birth by Water. While the latter is of the Corruptible Seed, the former is of the Seed Incorruptible. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/swii/swii-VI.htm)

The science of the Masters is an experimental science and, like any physical science, is capable of yielding results with mathematical accuracy. These results can very well be verified from the transformations that one can witness in the life of a man of sadhan (or one who practices spiritual discipline). It does not mean book-learning or accumulation of knowledge, but it means the coming into its own of the spirit, and its taking a new birth in cosmic awareness and rising into supramental or Super Consciousness. This realisation brings with it a blessed calmness and thereafter the immanence of God is always felt and the actual working of the Divine Will becomes manifest. Reason and intellect fail to comprehend the infinite Reality. Even after realisation, words but beggar one's attempt to describe the indescribable. This experimentation in Godhood can only be attempted and achieved in utter silence and stillness, both of the mind and the intellect, when like a revelation, His Light and Sound dawn upon the soul. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/swii/swii-VIII.htm)

It is a great blessing to have a living Master. And what is the criterion of that? He who can give you at least a lift from the body, open your inner eye to see the Light of God, and open your inner ear to hear the Sound. That is some capital to start with. When this is given, you just enter the second birth. And you go to the door of death, and beyond that. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/giftof.htm)

Spiritual comfort is God's free gift and not of our own merit. It comes only through the grace of some Godman. He is the "Way, the Truth, and the Life." The absorption in the Master alone helps one to gain the pool of nectar within and this is called a second birth or resurrection. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/naam/naam_amrit.htm)

This new life of the spirit begins from the day of initiation into the mysteries of the spirit, call it what you like: "Deeksha" as the Hindus do, "Baet" as the Muslims say, "Baptism" as it is known among the Christians, or "Pahul" as among the Sikhs. The Vedic seers gave it the name of "Duey Janama" which literally means second birth. The life of the spirit begins not with the theoretical exposition of the spiritual science but by a practical demonstration on the spiritual plane of the spirit-current made manifest. Here the invisible and inaudible life-stream is made both visible and audible to the spirit within, converting the atheist into a theist in the true sense of the term. It is imparting the life-impulse and making It throb in every pore of the body. This coming back of the soul to the realization of her true nature and rising into Universal or Cosmic awareness beyond the walls of finitude is true resurrection or coming to a new birth and a new life. To die in the body while living, is to live in the spirit. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/naam/naam_shabd3.htm)
7. From Darkness to Light

The one thing that frightens Satan is to see a light in your heart.
(Sufi Proverb)

Enlightenment – the process of bringing light in – is implicitly a key aspect of all the transformation metaphors we have been discussing. When we awaken, we open our eyes and perceive (with) more light. To become “lucid” (from lux, “light”) while dreaming is to bring a quality of transparent awareness to our experience. Similarly, when the cataracts that blind us, the veils or coverings, are removed, there is more light. When clouds of ignorance are dispelled, the light of the spiritual sun shines in brightness. Imprisoned in a dungeon or a cave, we are trapped in darkness; when liberated, we are dazzled by daylight.

For most people “enlightenment” is a process of imparting or acquiring knowledge about something. This is not, however, the meaning of enlightenment for the mystics and visionaries of Eastern and Western spiritual traditions. For them, light is not an abstract symbol but an experience that is lived and felt in the mind, the heart, the body, and the inner recesses of the psyche.

Enlightenment, then, is not merely a metaphor but rather an experience of one’s own inner essence, the Self, as a Being of Light.
Enlightenment, when defined as the rational acquisition of knowledge deals with only one limited aspect of human consciousness – the mental. The great spiritual traditions propose that the notion of enlightenment is meant to be taken much more literally. The process involves seeing more clearly, both internally and externally, so that there is more lucid awareness, a feeling of the light and warmth of love in the heart – ultimately a complete immersion in the ocean of light called God, Being, or Spirit. This aspect of consciousness transformation is actually a process of moving from darkness to more and more pervasive light and clarity.

It is an unmistakable fact that in the sacred literature and art of most religious and spiritual traditions, the symbolic imagery of enlightenment is central. The accounts of the mystics and seers of East and West are replete with experiences of and visions of light. The creation of the world, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, begins with God’s invocation, “Let there be light,” and the emergence of light out of primal darkness.

Modern science, in a rather parallel fashion, sees the universe beginning with an energy explosion of inconceivable force and radiance. The Creator works with light – is light. The Christ is called “the light of the world.” The vision of Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita is of a cosmic being of overwhelming radiance, “brighter than a thousand suns.”

In some traditions the duality of light and darkness is emphasized. In Taoism light is yang like the day and darkness yin like the night. “That which lets now the light, now the dark appear, is Tao.”
Enlightenment of the Physical Body:

There is the cogent testimony of those who report luminous energy phenomena – that is, light emissions from the body – of which present-day science is as yet unable to render an account. There are age-old traditions of subtle energy fields, or auras, surrounding living organisms, and some of these phenomena have in recent years proved amenable to measurement and recording, through such means as Kirlian photography and other methods.

*So wherever a Godman sits, He radiates the Light of the spirit around Him,*
*and whosoever comes in the field of His personal aura benefits from it.*

(Sant Kirpal Singh, ruhanisatsangusa.org/receptivity2.htm)

There is a universal tendency to depict saints and enlightened beings with haloes and auras of flame and light, and mystical literature is filled with accounts of yogis and prophets who were seen to be filled and overflowing with light. The nineteenth-century Indian saint Ramakrishna was frequently observed by his students to glow visibly.

*At one time I remember we were all sitting with the Master (Kirpal Singh) in India,*
*and someone told the Master when He was speaking they could see roses coming out of His mouth; another person described the beautiful brilliant aura they could see round the Master’s head; another person told how the Master was just streaming with Light...*  

![Photo of Sant Kirpal Singh - Charlotte, North Carolina - 1972](https://example.com/photo.jpg)

The photographer who took and developed this photo reported that this cloud of light was not a photo anomaly or a print anomaly.
There are many expressions in the world’s sacred literature that speak of the Self, or Spirit, as a light in the heart. The notion of the light in the heart is expounded by the Vedantist philosopher Shankara: “Atma rises in the heart like the sun of knowledge, destroying darkness, all-pervading, all-sustaining.”

Islamic mysticism also refers to the light in the heart. The fourteenth-century Sufi Mahmudi Kashani writes of the light of truth that is ordinarily veiled by our humanness: as long as it shines only through this veil, we call it faith. “If this same light attains directly to the heart and the veil of humanness does not intervene, then it is the light of certainty…The black cloud of human attributes rises up constantly and covers the face of the sun of truth. When it is uncovered, then the heart directly experiences the effulgences of that light.”

In all the great spiritual traditions, light has been the primary symbol, as well as original manifestation, of God, Divine Being, Spirit, the Immortal and Eternal.

**The Illumination of the Mind:**

Illumination of the mind is associated with wisdom and greater self-knowledge. It is important to emphasize again that those who have experienced this kind of enlightenment insist that the experience is literally and actually en-lightening, that the expression is not just metaphorical. As strange as this may sound to one who has not experienced it, the contents of the mind itself, its thoughts and images, can become filled and suffused with light, just as body structures and tissues can. Thus, the notion of the “mind’s eye,” which perceives with inner light, makes perfect sense experientially.
The Indian Vedanta philosophers equate the “light in the heart” (enlightened body) with the “sun of knowledge” (illumined mind), as was shown in the passage quoted from Shankara. This inner knowledge-light is said to be “all-pervading, all-sustaining, radiating throughout the world” – very much like the networks of thought energy, the collective tapestry of consciousness that links all humans and all forms of life.

These are paradoxical utterings, because the reality is difficult to convey. The enlightening of the body and the illumination of the mind are different experiences, but the light involved in both is the same. The mental and the sensory-physical are two distinct bands in the spectrum of awareness. Either one can be dark and obscure, or illumined with radiance.

In the New Testament there are many well known sayings that refer to Jesus as the “light of the world”; yet there are an equal number that make it abundantly clear that according to Christ’s teaching, every man and woman has, and is, a being of light within.

*The Light of the body is the eye: therefore when your eye is single,*  
*your whole body also is full of Light; but when your eye is evil,*  
*your body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore that the Light which is in you be not darkness.*  
*(Luke 11:34, 35)*

The Gnostic Gospel of Thomas reinforces this interpretation of the Christ teaching. When the disciples ask Jesus to show them where he is, he answers: “Within a man of light there is light, and he lights the whole world. When he does not shine, he is in darkness.”

*While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.*  
*(John 9:5)*

The significance of these passages is that they point unmistakably to light pervasive within and throughout the human being. They are consistent with many others in the Gospels and in Gnostic literature, where Jesus deflects the disciples’ attempts to idealize him as the only enlightened one or as the only son of God. “is it not written in your law, ‘I said, you are gods’?” Each human being is, in essence, a divine spirit of pure light. This light can come “down” or “through,” into mind and body, into outward expression and manifestation.

*This self-originated Clear Light, which from the very beginning was never born, is without any parents. This Clear Light has not been created by anyone, has never experienced birth and has nothing in it that could cause it to die. Although it is evidently visible, yet there be few who see it. Although it exists in everyone everywhere, it has gone unrecognized. And yet you go on hoping to attain some other fruit than this Clear Light elsewhere. Even though it is the thing that is most essentially yours, you seek for it elsewhere – how amazing!*  
*(Tibetan Buddhism)*
The Self as a Being of Light:

The basic feature of the experience of enlightenment appears to be a sensing, feeling, and knowing that one’s body, heart, and mind are being infused, usually from “above,” with inner light of a spiritual nature. Light coming in from above is a literal, direct perception in many instances of body enlightenment, and in some light-yoga practices, the light-energy is channeled into the body from above the head. When speaking of mental or spiritual illumination, “light coming in from above” is a metaphorical expression. The spatial metaphor is based on the understanding that the light is of spiritual origin, that it comes from a part of our being, our totality, that is “higher” than the body or mind. Thus Spirit, which is Self, which is Light, comes into and suffuses the body, the emotions, and the mind – the entire psyche. Thus it is transformation by illumination.

The point is that you are seeing something beyond nature, beyond the existential, beyond the psychic, beyond even cosmic identity. You are starting to see the hidden or esoteric dimension, the dimension that transcends nature. You see the Light, and sometimes this Light literally shines like the light of a thousand suns. It overwhelms you, empowers you, energizes you, remakes you, drenches you. This is what scholars have called the "numinous" nature of subtle spirit. Numinous and luminous. That is, no doubt, why saints are universally depicted with halos of light around their heads. That is actually what they see - Divine Light.

(Ken Wilber)

If you were able to go inward right now and waken your sleeping Buddha, what would you find? Tibetan Buddhism says that at the heart of you, me, every single person, and all other creatures great and small, is an Inner Radiance that reflects our essential nature, which is always utterly positive. Tibetans refer to this Inner Light as Pure Radiance or Innate Luminosity; in fact, they call it Ground Luminosity because it is the “bottom line.” There is nothing after this, nothing before this. This luminosity is birthless and deathless. It is a luminescent emptiness, called “Clear Light,” and it is endowed with the heart of unconditional compassion and love.

(Lama Surya Das)
Once the light of divine Spirit is received and perceived, the process of transformation takes almost a quantum leap forward in intensity and rapidity. With the dawning of the inner light of Spirit, a new and higher phase is initiated. The individual is now “fired with enthusiasm” because connected to the divine source or ground of all life.

*Once you discover this Light and learn to live by it, your whole existence will be changed. Love will permeate your very being and it will burst forth from the very pores of your body.*

(Sant Kirpal Singh)

*True love, wisdom and power are the greatest gifts that one gets by basking in the sunshine of Heaven’s Light.*

(Sant Kirpal Singh)

*When you come in contact with Light and Sound Power within, you have not to adopt any virtues, but everything, all virtues, will come within you of themselves.*

(Sant Kirpal Singh)

That the innermost spiritual essence in humans is of light is emphasized again and again in the sacred literature of ancient India. “Like the sun when the clouds are removed – Atman is revealed shining when our ignorance is dispelled,” wrote the Vedantist philosopher Shankara. “The light that shines beyond this heaven, beyond all, in the highest worlds beyond which there are none higher, is truly the same light that shines within the person.” According to the Chandogya Upanishad.

The idea that the Light/Self/Atman is identified with, or unified with, the cosmic divine principle is consonant with the statements of the mystics. They declare that the light they experience is eternal and infinite, a light beyond the duality of light versus darkness.
What is the nature of this mysterious mystic illumination? Apart from the certitude it imparts, what is the form which it most usually assumes in the consciousness of the self? The mystics seem to assure us that its apparently symbolic name is really descriptive; that they do experience a kind of radiance, a flooding of the personality with new light. A new sun rises above the horizon, and transfigures their twilit world. Over and over again they return to light-imagery in this connection. Frequently, as in their first conversion, they report an actual and overpowering consciousness of radiant Light, ineffable in its splendor, as an accompaniment of their inward adjustment. “Light rare, untellable!” said Whitman. “The flowing Light of the Godhead,” said Mechthild of Magdeburg. Saint Hildegarde described her revelations as appearing in a special Light, more brilliant than the brightness round the sun. It is an “infused brightness,” says Saint Teresa, “a Light which knows no night; but rather, as it is always light, nothing ever disturbs it.” It really seems as though the mystics’ attainment of new levels of consciousness did bring with it the power of perceiving a splendor always there, but beyond the narrow range of our poor sight…The cumulative testimony on this point is such as would be held to prove, in any other department of knowledge, that there is indeed an actual Light, “lighting the very light” and awaiting the recognition of men. (Evelyn Underhill, Mysticism: The Illumination of the Self)

My mind withdrew its thoughts from experience, extracting itself from the contradictory throng of sensuous images, that it might find out what that Light was wherein it was bathed…And thus, with the flash of one hurried glance, it attained to the vision of That Which Is.

(Saint Augustine)

I wish I could give a description of at least the smallest part of what I learned, but, when I try to discover a way of doing so, I find it impossible; for, while the light we see here and that other Light are both light, there is no comparison between the two and the brightness of the sun seems quite dull if compared with the other. In short, however skillful the imagination may be, it will not succeed in picturing or describing what that Light is like.

(Saint Teresa of Avila)

Absolutely unutterable and indescribable are the lightning like splendors of Divine Beauty; neither can speech express nor hearing apprehend. Shall we name the brilliance of the morning star, the brightness of the moon, the radiance of the sun - the glory of all these is unworthy of being compared with the true Light, standing farther from it than does the gloomiest night and the most terrible darkness from midday brightness.

(Saint Basil the Great)

Exalted, drawn, and absorbed into the uncreated Light, I beheld that which cannot be related.

(Angela of Foligno)
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

How May One Experience the Inner Divine Light?

Answer: The experience of the Inner Divine Light is a gift from God. The following explanation is taken from the writings of Master Kirpal Singh:

The gifts that a Master can give, no son of man can do it. He comes to the world with a Commission from God. Masters have been giving out suchlike things in their own language from time to time. Those who come in contact with a Master really know, really see, what He gives. The gifts that a Master can give, nobody else can give. What is that Power that gives this gift? It is the manifested God in Him. You may remember the story in the Bible of Christ asking the Samaritan lady for some water. Because of an inferiority complex, she thought that as Christ belonged to a higher level of life, why should He ask her for water, and so she did not give Him any. Christ then said to her, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting Life". He also said, "I am the Bread of Life. This Bread of Life has come down from Heaven. Whoever partaketh of it shall have everlasting life".

What is that Bread or Water of Life? It is the God-into-Expression Power, which has two phases, one Light and the other Sound Principle. It is also known as the Music of the Spheres or the Music of all Harmony. All Masters who came in the past have referred to it, whether they came in one country or another. So suchlike Bread and Water of Life can only be given by a man who has become Word made flesh. He works at the human pole of course, but His soul partakes of the Bread and Water of Life. This is given by Him to others, for on spiritual health depends the life of mind and body both. Nobody on earth can give such a gift, except He who has become a conscious co-worker of the Divine Plan, the mouthpiece of God. So this Bread of Life is already within us, but we cannot taste of it because the attention, which is the outward expression of the soul, is under the control of the mind. The mind is further under the control of the outgoing faculties and the outgoing faculties are dragging us into the outside world and to the physical body. We are so much identified with these things that we have forgotten our Self. Through the grace of the Master, we are given some experience to forget the world outside for a while, to rise above body consciousness and to open the inner eye, the single eye, to see the Light of God and to hear the Voice of God. Christ said, "You see things that the old Prophets did not see, you hear things that the old Prophets did not hear". So such a gift is given by a Master. (ruhanisangsusa.org/mt/true-bread.htm)

Now the question comes: How to open that eye with which He can be seen? He says, when you close your eyes, there is darkness. Look penetratingly into it; put your whole attention into it. That is knocking on the door, you see, and it shall be opened. You continue to look directly into that and you will find Light. Who will see that Light? Your very Self…Tulsi says, "How to penetrate this darkness? Sit at the feet of a Master - He gives you a boost, you see Light." Is it not wonderful? Is it not a miracle? What more miracle is required?
(ruhanisangsusa.org/coming.htm)
8. Integrating the Inner Wild Animal

Don’t allow your animal nature to rule your reason.
(Rumi)

The significance of animals in human consciousness and in the process of psycho-spiritual transformation can hardly be overestimated. The wisdom teachings of ancient times, encoded in the metaphors and symbols of ritual and myth, agree on the necessity for human beings to come to terms with their creature heritage. According to these teachings, we have both a human and an animal layer in our psyches.

Indeed, the English word *animal* comes from the Latin word *anima*, meaning “soul.” The human and the animal psyche are often either dissociated or in conflict with each other; and this dissociative condition is reflected in the abuse and exploitation of animal wildlife by “civilized” humanity. The philosophical traditions of transformation teach that this duality must be reconciled and brought into harmonious balance.

An examination of the findings of evolutionary biology reveals that residues of animal evolution are very much present in our bodies, especially our brain and nervous system, with profound influence on our minds and behavior. To recognize ourselves, homo sapiens, as an animal species implies also that we recognize the other animals – primates, mammals, reptiles, vertebrates – as the evolutionary ancestors of the human species.
Perhaps nowhere in biological science is the intimate relationship of human consciousness with animal consciousness revealed more clearly than in the theory of brain organization developed by neurobiologist Paul MacLean. MacLean’s theory is that the human brain is actually composed of three distinct layers, superimposed upon one another in evolutionary sequence.

The lowest and oldest of the three brains is a group of ganglia at the base of the forebrain that MacLean calls the R-complex or reptilian brain which is involved in many of the self-preserving and species-preserving behavior patterns that are still observed in mammals, primates and humans. They include establishing and defending territories, ritualistic fighting, establishing dominance hierarchies, mating, courtship, and migration. Reptiles, however, are limited in their capacity to learn, and only rarely take care of their young. These two important functions are first noted in the mammals and are largely based in the limbic system.

The second is the limbic system, which has strong connections via the hypothalamus to visceral and endocrine functions and is referred to by MacLean as the mammalian or old mammalian brain. This brain system organizes experience in terms of primary emotions such as fear, rage, sex-love, parental love, curiosity, sociability, joy and excitement.

The third component of our triune brain is what is called the primate neocortex. Found in the higher mammals, primates and hominids, it is concerned with the perception and interpretation of external reality and the making of decisions in anticipation of future events.

In humans, clearly, the ability to reflect on experience, to examine inner perceptions, to observe one’s own expression and behavior, and to empathize with others is highly developed. Yet one might well ask whether many of our difficulties in living successfully on this planet cannot be traced to unconscious repetition of behaviors that are genetically imprinted in these earlier animal brain systems. The three minds often do not coordinate very well with one another, as they vie for control of the body-vehicle.
The worldwide prevalence of violence could be, in part, an unconscious residue of reptilian and mammalian predation and territoriality. Nourishing and caring for live young is a mammalian invention; reptiles mostly don’t seem to recognize their young (except for the birds) and will as soon eat them as feed them.

In the New Testament, the story of Jesus being born in a stable, surrounded by animals, is a metaphoric allusion to the fact that each human spirit is born into the body of an animal. The story reminds us: the divine has been born into human form, and the human comes from and lives among animals. Animal, human, and God are synthesized in one sacred, archetypal image. As an adult, Jesus was to counsel his disciples to be “wise (or cunning) as serpents and harmless (or innocent or gentle) as doves” when they went out into the world, where they would otherwise be as “sheep among the wolves.”

American Indian and other native cultures regard animals as potential allies and protectors, to be respected and humbly learned from. Among the Pueblo Indians, for example, animal figures are curers, and the healing societies align themselves with animals such as bear, wolf, eagle, or mountain lion. The healers take on names of these animals: they wear their masks and headdress; they dance and chant as these animals, invoking their strength, their healing knowledge.
Rumi

If you can disentangle yourself from your selfish self all heavenly spirits will stand ready to serve you. If you can finally hunt down your own beastly self you have the right to claim Solomon’s kingdom. You are that blessed soul who belongs to the garden of paradise! Is it fair to let yourself fall apart in a shattered house? You are the bird of happiness in the magic of existence! What a pity when you let yourself be chained and caged. But if you can break free from this dark prison named body soon you will see you are the Sage and the Fountain of Life!

Your lower, hellish nature tries to lead you into temptation, but you have struggled hard and now your soul is full of purity. You have quenched the fires of lust for God’s sake, and they have been transformed into the light of guidance. The fire of anger has turned to forbearance, the darkness of ignorance to knowledge, the fire of greed to unselfishness, and the thorns of envy to the roses of love. You have extinguished these fires for the love of God, and converted your fiery nature into a verdant orchard. The nightingales of the remembrance and glorification of God sing sweetly in the garden of your heart. Answering the call of God, you have brought the water of the spirit into the blazing hell of your soul.

Kill the snake of desire in the beginning; or watch out: your snake will become a dragon!

Within the human being is a jungle. You, born of the Divine Breath, be aware. Wolves and pigs by the thousands are within, the fair and the foul. What dominates within is what you are. If your gold outweighs your copper, you will be known as gold. Whatever you most are is the form in which you will resurrect.
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

If only man would become a true man, he would find himself in that enviable position that Kabir disclosed to us: "God is running after me, calling Kabir, Kabir." We are more like animals though our form is human, for we have the animal spirit. If we do not rise above the lower impulses, we are not entitled to be called human beings. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/death.htm)

There is within the all-comprehending ambit of animal instincts, some secret urge which drives the chosen few, called the elect, toward the transcending of animal impulses, leading to complete disinterestedness by total disregard of the animal-ego on the one hand and willing submission to a self-sought death on the other, in spite of the strong opposition of instincts, impulses and ego arrayed against an inspired soul. (Sant Kirpal Singh, Naam or Word, To the Honest Seeker)

The whole creation is the temple of God. There is no place where He is not. In minerals life is sleeping; in plants life is dreaming; in birds and animals life is awakening; and in man life is awake. As such we are brothers of all creatures, of plants, of birds and animals. So the flowers and trees, sparrows and doves are as members of our own order. How simple, pure, loving and beautiful they are! We should love all. We should live in fellowship with all creatures, with all life. One must not interfere with the life of any animal in God's creation. (Portrait of Perfection, 143)

This mind is like an ocean in which unending waves of animal passions, anger, greed, attachment, and egotism are constantly emanating. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/control_mind.htm)

There is a great gulf between a man and an animal. A man is gifted with the power of discrimination. He can judge right from wrong and is free to choose between the two. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/control_mind.htm)

You can say we are animal-driven. The outer enjoyments drag our senses around, the senses in turn rule the mind, and mind rules the intellect; the poor soul is in the midst of it all, helpless, even though the entire machinery is running on the soul's strength. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/solve.htm)

We are not men, we are beasts in men. By appearance we have the man body, but in our habits, our nature, our everything, we are like beasts, like animals; and even worse than that: we are even worse than serpents biting. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/truesat.htm)

Without the knowledge of the science of "man-making", mastery over the self or animal man cannot be successfully accomplished, for until this self mastery is achieved, the higher or spiritual part of man's nature cannot come into play. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/rs sos.htm)
9. Journey to the Place of Vision and Power

Come, come, whoever you are - wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving.
It doesn't matter. Ours is not a caravan of despair.
Come, even if you have broken your vows a thousand times.
Come, yet again, come, come.
(Rumi)

The sense of our movement through the ever-changing flux of life’s events as a journey is certainly an almost universal human experience. Our life is a journey, with a beginning, middle, and end; it is a going out, extending into the world, and a returning, or settling down.

The process of self-transformation is a journey within that journey, a branching out from the main trunk, a new growing. The literature of mysticism and mythology the world over speaks of transformation as a journey to another land, along a river, up a mountain, through a wilderness, into the depths of the earth, or searching for a hidden castle of marvels.

As we wander we change. The pilgrim who arrives at the sacred place is not the same person who left home. The seeker who returns to her family or tribe, bringing gifts of power, healing, or vision, is a transformed individual.

Long and narrow is the ancient path – I have found it, I have traveled it.
This is the path by which the wise, the knowers of Brahman, ascend to the divine realms upon leaving this body form, and attain liberation.
(Upanishades)
There is the mythic hero’s journey, told of with masterful eloquence by Joseph Campbell in his *Hero with a Thousand Faces*. The pattern of the myth is consistent: there is departure, arrival, and return. The departure involves what Campbell describes as a “call to adventure”: the hero leaves “home,” the safe world of conventional reality. The journey includes many tests, obstacles, challenges, and battles. The goal is a place where the hero is given knowledge, magical power, healing, or a priceless gift. The hero then returns with this gift or power to the everyday world of family, tribe, or village. This returning with a gift or power means, metaphorically speaking, that after the mythic journey we are changed, we have a new identity – we are now empowered as teachers, healers, or seers.

Each of the many kinds of journeys, with its mythic variations, provides a recognizable symbolic description of a type of transformation experience. The completed journey always ends with a return, a homecoming, to the ordinary world of conventional reality that was left behind. This world has been transformed, if our journey has been successful, into a new world seen with fresh eyes. The end of the journey is the beginning of a new, empowered way of life.

This theme of returning home connects to an important variant of this journey metaphor: the idea that in ordinary life, we already are on a journey, that we come from a faraway place, that we are in exile. According to this metaphoric pattern, the mystical journey of enlightenment is actually a return to our original home, to a place we have forgotten.
People differ greatly in the quality of their experience of life’s journey, and for each one of us, there may be differences in the type of journey at different stages of life. Some of us – probably all of us at some time – wander restlessly and aimlessly through life. At other times we may be seized by a sudden sense of destiny: we start off and aim for a destination, a definite goal. Perhaps our purpose is to escape some intolerable situation. Or the goal may be worldly: to attain power, wealth, fame, or love. Or it may be supernatural and mystical: a quest for meaning, a longing for God, a thirst for wisdom, a need to heal.

The mythic wandering hero represents the human ego exploring and discovering the world of reality as he or she grows up to adulthood, traversing the rites of passage and the transitions and challenges of each phase. This journey of growth and development follows parallel lives for people in all cultures. The spiritual quest, the transformational journey, begins when the hero leaves home, leaving behind the familiar, conventional world in order to journey into the “far country,” to the magical castle, the sacred city; to ascend the holy mountain; or to cross the great seas and deserts.

The thing we tell of can never be found by seeking, yet only seekers find it.

(Bayezid Bistami)
The “path” or “journey” of both mysticism and mythology is a key metaphor for the process of self-transformation. The writings of the mystics are quite explicit about the interior nature of this journey: they tell us that the terrain to be explored and traversed is our own psyche. They give detailed landmarks for those who recognize they are on an inner journey and who need further guidance. They tell us that the “castle” is “interior,” and that there is a “valley of detachment,” a “swamp of despair.” The mystics offer interpretations that reveal the psychological meanings of their symbols and metaphors.

*Do not be dismayed, daughters, at the number of things which you have to consider before setting out on this Divine Journey, which is the royal road to heaven. By taking this road we gain such precious treasures that it is no wonder if the cost seems to us a high one. The time will come when we shall realize that all we have paid has been nothing at all by comparison with the greatness of our prize.*

(Saint Teresa of Avila)

Climbing the holy mountain, traversing the seven valleys, wandering in the wilderness, finding and exploring the interior castle, tracing the maze or labyrinth – each of these metaphors points to a change in point of view, a reorientation of awareness, a new sense of direction, as the crucial shift that takes place in the process of transformation. Through such changes of consciousness we learn to escape from the cycles of meaninglessness and the wastelands of hopelessness. When this shift occurs, we recognize that we are not the victims or the effects of uncontrollable external circumstances: the journey of transformation is within us. Therefore, we choose the destination; intention guides us to our destiny.

*Know that since God created human beings and brought them out of nothingness into existence, they have not stopped being travelers.*

(Ibn al’ Arabi)
The worm is in the root of the body’s tree; travelers, it is late! Life’s sun is going to set. During these brief days that you have strength, be quick and spare no effort of your wings. (Rumi)

Our desire for God is fanned by His love: it is His attraction that draws all wayfarers along the path. Does dust rise up without a wind? Does a ship float without the sea? (Rumi)

Whether you are fast or slow, eventually you will find what you are seeking. Always devote yourself wholeheartedly to your Search. Even though you may limp or be bent double, do not abandon your Search, but drag yourself ever toward Him. (Rumi)

The sweetness and delights of the resting-place are in proportion to the pain endured on the Journey. Only when you suffer the pangs and tribulations of exile will you truly enjoy your homecoming. (Rumi)

If you are a true believer, arise now, enter the ranks of battle, for a feast has been prepared for you in heaven. Close your lips against food and drink: hasten toward the heavenly table. Keep your gaze steadfastly fixed on heaven, quivering like the willow in your desire to attain it. (Rumi)
It is necessary to have a Guide for the spiritual journey. Choose a Master, for without Him this journey is full of tribulations, fears, and dangers. With no escort, you would be lost on a road you have already taken. Do not travel alone on the Path. (Rumi)

Do not take a step on the Path of Love without a guide. I have tried it one hundred times and failed. (Hafiz)

It is easier to drag along a mountain by a hair than to emerge from the self by oneself. (Abu Sa’id ibn Abi-Khayr)

Not all spiritual paths lead to the harmonious Oneness. Indeed, most are detours and distractions, nothing more. (Lao-tzu)

Those who seek the easy way do not seek the True Way. (Dogen)

Whoever believes he can reach God by his own efforts toils in vain; whoever believes he can reach God without effort is merely a traveler on the road of intent. (Abu Sa’id Al-Kharraz)

It is a grave error for anyone to imagine he will attain anything or that anything will be revealed to him of the Path without persistent striving on his part. (Abu Uthman Al-Hiri)

He travels with whoever looks for Him, and having taken the seeker by the hand, He arouses him to go in search of himself. (Al-Ansari)
From of old there were not two paths. Those who have arrived, all walked the same road. (Zenrin)

Keep strenuously toiling along this Path. Do not rest until the last breath; for that last breath may yet bring the blessings from the Knower of all things. (Rumi)

You too put your best foot forward. If you do not wish to, then follow your fantasies. But if you prefer the secrets of the love of your soul you will sacrifice everything. You will lose what you consider valuable, but you will soon hear the sacramental word “Enter.” (Attar)

An intending disciple said to Dhu-I-Nun, the Egyptian. “Above everything in this world I wish to enroll in The Path of Truth.” Dhu-I-Nun told him: “You can accompany our caravan only if you first accept two things. One is that you will have to do things which you do not want to do. The other is that you will not be permitted to do things which you desire to do. It is “wanting” which stands between man and The Path of Truth.” (Dhu-I-Nun)

Not I, not anyone else, can travel that road for you. You must travel it yourself. (Walt Whitman)

You are constantly being sent signs from the Universe about what path to take. (Sanaya Roman)

What is the use of going over the old track again? You must make tracks into the unknown. (Henry David Thoreau)
The magnetic needle always points toward the north, and hence the sailing vessel does not lose her course. So long as the heart of man is directed towards God, he cannot be lost in the ocean of worldliness. (Ramakrishna)

For thirty years I went in search of God, and when I opened my eyes at the end of this time, I discovered that it was really He who sought for me. (Bayazid al-Bistami)

May your soul be happy; journey joyfully.  
(Rumi)
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

The journey may be long but has to be completed. Life is running out, let not vain pursuits deflect us from our Noble Path. (The Teachings of Kirpal Singh, v. 3, 170)

The two things that emerge from an examination of the popular forms of yoga that were evolved after Patanjali are: first that the soul can rise above physical consciousness, given means whereby it can focus its energies, without recourse to the arduous control of pranas, and second that full spiritual realization or true samadhi is not merely a matter of transcending the physical (though that is necessary as a first step), but is the end of a complex inner journey in which there are many intermediate stages the attainment of which, under certain conditions, may be mistaken for the final goal and may thus debar further progress. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/col/col5a.htm)

The Satguru or the True Master points out the way to the Kingdom of God. He tells us that the Divine Music comprised of five strains or melodies is always going on in the body. This continuous symphony is the connecting link between the creation and the Creator. It is the ladder which the soul has to climb step by step in its onward journey to the Kingdom of God. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/simran.htm)

The True Master gives some capital with which to start the spiritual journey. The Saint has given me some capital. This capital is given through Their grace. With Their life impulse, They give the true devotion. Through applying Their life impulse, They rejoin the soul to the Lord with devotion. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/ineffable.htm)

The rare boon of holy Initiation…is not an end in itself but just a beginning, a preliminary step for starting on the long journey for the soul to the true Home of the Father. Those who have chosen to undertake this course of life are indeed fortunate and experience this rare phenomena of 'death-in-life' and thus become…liberated beings, while yet in flesh…

When a disciple reaches the Radiant Form of the Master, his job of self-effort is over. The Guru Dev now takes charge of the spirit and trains the spirit in Shabd-bhakti in the real sense, or devotion to the Sound Current, which is his own real form. From here He takes the spirit along with Him on the spiritual journey that lies through countless regions of varying spiritual sublimity: the causal or instrumental plane, the seed-world, the ever pregnant Mother with vast and countless creations lying involved in its womb; and then into the Super-cosmic Beyond (Par Barhmand) planes of Silence (Sunn) and Great Silence (Maha Sunn), and finally Sach Khand where dwells the Formless One of ineffable radiance (the Ocean of Consciousness) called Sat Purush, the primal manifestation of the Supreme Being. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/mod/mod_iii.htm)
Para Vidya has boundless possibilities, unfolding new realms of celestial splendor as the pilgrim soul proceeds on the Path. It is a very pleasant journey, for the wayfarer has with him a sure companion, an unerring guide who knows the Path and its dangerous turns and twists. He takes him along in safety, shows him especially beautiful scenes and makes him acquainted with everything on the way. His companion has a radiantly smiling face and a divine dignity, and imparts to him directly that first-hand knowledge of the Beyond of which the pilgrim may have read in books. With all its traps, turns and slips, the Path moves through a belvedere of uncommon splendor and affords a sure way out to a haven of rest and repose. The journey's end is nothing but the Kingdom of God where peace and quiet reign, the New Jerusalem or Holy City. Thus real Gyan or knowledge deals with Realized Truth.

When you have arrived at certain conclusions and have been blessed with the boon of right understanding that this present earth life is a passing phase in the long journey of the soul from the lower categories of creation up to its origin, then hie onward lovingly and faithfully. Know for certain that you, while here in this world, living amongst mortals, are commissioned with the divine blessing of proceeding back to your True Home. Soul in its present state is so enmeshed by the environment of mind and matter, that it is difficult to talk of its proceeding Homeward for it has forgotten its True Home. The Holy Meditations, when undertaken accurately and regularly, bless you with the right understanding of striving for the inner journey, and your conviction of the sacred Truths is strengthened. Time factor is essential and, as such, much patience and perseverance are required.

When a drop of water loses its identity in the ocean, it becomes an integral part of the ocean itself. In the same way a spirit, when it once enters into Godhood or merges in God, no longer remains an individual spirit for the rest of the allotted span of its physical existence but is an integral part of God, the very Ocean of Life. All this can be achieved only through the Grace of a Master-soul; and thus the tedious journey Homeward is accomplished quite easily and smoothly. It is not given to man to achieve this by himself, unaided by a Satguru.

*It is the fundamental law of God,\[0.5cm]*
*that no one can move Godward without the aid of a Satguru.\[0.5cm]*
*(War Bihagra M.4)*

There is one and only one way Godward, for all alike, rich or poor, high or low, learned or unlettered, Oriental or Occidental, Laplanders of the North or Bushmen of the South. It is the most ancient and the most natural way, universal in its appeal, since it is ordained by God Himself for His children, no matter wherever in the wide world they may be or whatever religion they may profess, and whatever be their color, caste or creed. This in essence is the scope of spiritual science as taught by Master-souls from time to time, according to the needs of the age in which they lived and in the then common language of the people. Hence the basic similarity in their teachings.

When you close your eyes there is darkness, but when the Light is seen, then the inner journey starts; first to rise above the physical into the astral plane where the Light will become stronger. In the causal plane it will be yet stronger, and from then onward the Light is so strong as to be incomparable with millions of suns and moons.
10. Returning to the Source

Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts can find no rest except in Thee.
(Saint Augustine)

In the previous metaphor the journey of transformation was seen as an experience of leaving your home in the ordinary, familiar world, and traveling to a faraway place, or to a magical Otherworld, where you are changed and then return to the place of family and friends to live in a new way.

The metaphor of returning to the Source conveys the quality of transformation as a homeward journey rather than an outbound journey. It sees human life as a kind of exile, an alien environment in which you feel like a stranger and from which you return to your true home, to the place where you came from, your source and origin.

The longing to go back to the Source is present in each being from the very time that it is separated from the Source by the veil of ignorance.
(Meher Baba)
The Chinese and Japanese Taoist and Buddhist masters frequently use the imagery of returning to the origin, to our true home, to the primordial beginning, in describing the experience of enlightenment.

Life itself is seen as a great outward journey, initiated at birth, for learning and exploration. The path of spiritual evolution then is one of turning inward, returning to the world of spirit and light from whence we came.

An associated image is that of ordinary life as a kind of exile, where we are separated from our true spiritual home. The great Flemish mystic Jan van Ruysbroek wrote: “Knowledge of ourselves teaches us from whence we came, where we are and where we are going. We come from God and we are in exile.”

The transformation to a new way of being is compared to the process of one who leaves exile or imprisonment and slavery and returns to the place of origin. The New Testament parable of the prodigal son who returns to his royal parents, after wasting his talents in debauchery and forgetting his mission, also fits this pattern.
In both Western and Asian traditions, the theme of return is an essential component of spiritual teaching. The image is so pervasive and so consistent across many traditions that we may safely conclude that we are dealing with an archetype.

We find the image associated with a model for the development of consciousness, in which there are two phases: an outward movement, a descending arc (often called involuntary), and an inward movement, as ascending arc (called evolutionary). In the latter we return to the paradise state we had left. The evolutionary path of the mystics involves a going back to Spirit, to the ground of being, to Brahman, to the Tao, to the Godhead.

In a typical transformation process, after one has an awakening vision or breakthrough, the everyday world of family and society may be experienced as strange and unfamiliar – literally “not of the family.” Having obtained even a glimpse into higher realms of consciousness, having seen the daytime sun outside the Platonic cave, the seeker may feel lost because he or she can no longer relate to the old, illusory shadows within the prison-cave. The seeker becomes a wandering stranger, filled with longing for a faraway home, the memories of which lie in the heart.

*No man who has lived through a temporary spiritual experience is ever likely to forget it. His days will be haunted until he sets out to seek ways and means of repeating it.*

(Paul Brunton)

Becoming aware of the exiled or alienated condition we are in is, as always, the necessary first step to returning on the homeward journey. Thus, paradoxically, the closer we come to the source from where we originated, the more acutely we sense our estrangement.

*Sentient beings wish to return to their origin where their nature will be in perfect unity.*

(Buddhism)
The spiritual and mystical traditions of both East and West have consistently distinguished between two phases of the process of transformation. Using the metaphor of a path or journey, these can be expressed most simply as the outgoing journey and the returning journey. The outward journey is our ordinary life in physical form, our worldly existence from birth to death. The return journey is the inner quest for our origins, the quest to remember our purpose and to find again the light within, from which we became separated.

All whom Moses calls wise are represented as sojourners... Their way is to visit earthly nature as men who travel abroad to see and learn. So when they have stayed a while in their bodies, and beheld through them all that senses and mortality has to show, they make their way back to the place from which they set out at first. To them the heavenly region, where their citizenship lies, is their native land; the earthly region, in which they become sojourners, is a foreign country.

(Philo Judaeus, 1st century Neoplatonist philosopher)

The metaphor of the return journey for the process of transformation implies, therefore, that an outward journey, into the alien world of conventional and social reality, precedes this inward turning toward spiritual reality.

In the writings of mystics and visionaries, the home or origin or source we return to is often described as “behind,” “within,” “underneath,” or “above” the usual world of phenomenal appearances. To call it “behind” suggests that our original home is veiled from our knowledge by perceptual screens and filters. Calling it “within” points to an eternal orientation as having brought us into the state of exile. “Underneath” suggests that the source of our existence is a kind of ground, the ground of being, of which the existentialists speak. “Above” suggests that we have come into the world of limits and forms from higher realms, from God, the Infinite, the Absolute.
In theosophical and other esoteric formulations, the movement from spirit into matter is described as involutionary, a “descent” into form, into embodiment, a building and inhabiting of form, the clothing or wrapping of the Spirit into bodies, the Logos into flesh. In such a model, the evolutionary movement is an unfolding of the spiritual essence within material and biological forms: a series of successive self-transcendences that lead us, over countless aeons, to the divine home from which we came.

There is the evolution of spirit into matter: the out-turning, unfolding, explicating. There is also the involution of spirit into matter: form building, creating, embodying. There is an evolution of matter toward spirit: enlightening, spiritualizing, transcending. And there is an involution of matter toward spirit: turning inward, internalizing, implicating.

The homeward or returning path is an evolutionary transformation, because through an unfolding of latent capacities the individual becomes personally aware of his or her unity with the original source-Self.

The homeward journey is one of self-revelation, in which we gain insight into our true nature and awareness of the alienation of our ordinary condition. We may see, if we are so graced, the original face we had before we were born, or become one with our primordial nature.

_Dhu-I-Nun was asked, “What is the end of the mystic?”  
He answered, “When he is as he was where he was before he was.”_
Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

There is no greater aim or goal for the soul, when it is born into the human species, than to rejoin the Lord - to make its way back to its Source, via the holy pathway. This has been the ultimatum of all great Masters who come to earth to help mankind realize this very aim. Having received the good fortune of the human birth, which is the highest form of all the species, this is man's most important task in life. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/ineffable.htm)

There are two powers. One is the highest power which is the Creator of all. Then, at a lower level, the Negative Power is made; that is always going into expression for the purpose of formation of the world. That is Brahm; it is made for that. So there is nothing devilish... Kabir says, "God created two powers, Negative and Positive. Positive has its own work and Negative is going into expression. One goes in toward the Source, the other recedes outward."

So truly speaking, there is no Satan, only those Powers are created Kal and Akal, Negative and Positive. They each have their own work. Those under the command of the Negative Power, they always like to go out into expression. And those who want to come back again to their Home, naturally they follow the Positive way. That is given through the Saints: Contact with God into expression, called Naam or Word, which has got two manifestations, Light and Sound. When you are contacted with that, it will take you direct to the Source from where it emanated: the true Home of our Father. So there is no antagonism, but that [Negative Power] is made for the purpose of Creation; because He had to make the Creation.

If you light a candle, the flame will go up because the Source of light is the sun. If you invert it, even then the flame will go up, because the source is above. If you throw a clod of earth into the air, however forcefully you may send it, again it will come to the earth because the source of the clod is beneath. Similarly, mind is negative in its affect. It is always working to take you into expression. But the soul is of the Positive side, it wants to take you up to its own source. When soul is freed from the mind, that goes to God. So mind is made (for) the purpose of keeping the world going. Without mind, the world could not go on. Kal and Akal both are expressions of the Absolute. The Absolute is from where they all come. This is an intricate question, of course, but it can be understood this way. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/gemsqa.htm)

The Power and Spirit of God is All-pervading. It is ever-present and ever-vibrating. By attuning to the Divine Melody, the soul is spontaneously lifted, as it were in an electric lift, to higher and higher regions and one proceeds on and on in the wake of the tuneful Music which gradually becomes more and more subtle until it gets absorbed into the Source whence it proceeds - the Absolute, the Anami or the Nameless and the Wordless. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/mod/mod_intro.htm)

-Out of this temple of the body I am hearing a Sound calling me,  
"Come up." Bell is ringing wildly: "Come back, my children, come back."
(Shamas Tabrez)

A Sound is coming from the eternal abode to call you back.  
(Tulsi Sahib)
In truth, we are soul. The soul is of the same essence as that of God—Who is All-Consciousness. And so we are a conscious entity - a drop of the Ocean of All-Consciousness. That Ocean is swelling full, and can be called the Lord or God. Every drop of essence desires to return to its Source - it is a natural inclination, and this natural yearning remains with us, in one form or another: we want to be happy, we want lasting peace, and so on. We seek the goal in all manner of ways, but the search is always outward. If we come to realize that the goal lies within us, sorrow overcomes us with the knowledge of that wasted time.

The natural yearning to meet the Lord is innate in every human being, although most people seek Him outwardly wherever His Name is represented. If a man is disappointed in his search, again he turns to seek elsewhere; and so his life becomes a series of wasted efforts. As a child, man just plays. Then he goes on to indulge in all the sensual pleasures and the intellectual pursuits. Finally he begins to realize that there is no true happiness or lasting peace in all this, and starts searching for something else. If his yearning is strong enough and his search sincere, established within him, then the Lord Himself knows this and makes arrangements for the seeker to find Someone to help him - Someone who has already realized the Lord, Someone who may be called by any name you wish, but is, in fact, a Guru. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/yearning.htm)

The way to the Absolute leads through many mansions (planes and sub-planes) lying on the way from the physical to the Father’s Home. The journey is fraught with danger. The mental planes are altogether impassable without a guide fully conversant with the turns and twists of the path. Hence the imperative need for a Guru (torch-bearer) or a competent Master, a regular traveler on the way, fully cognizant of the difficulties and hazards that beset the path. He alone who is conversant with the way Godward, can safely take the spirit through slippery regions of blinding light and bewildering shadows and through delusive siren-charms and the terrors of the unknown. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/mod/mod_intro.htm)

The Masters, the Messiahs, the teachers and prophets all the world over fall into two categories with a separate mission assigned to each. There are, on the one hand, those whose sole purpose is to keep the world going harmoniously; and on the other hand there are those who are commissioned to lead back souls who are ripe for home-going, and yearn for an early return to the Source Spiritual from which they parted long ago before drifting downward to the material plane. In the first category fall all the reformers, and in the second such Sants and Sadhs as are competent to reveal the knowledge of God and to make manifest the power of God in man.

The process of ascent back to the Source is just the reverse of that of descent down to the physical plane, and one has therefore to reintegrate himself, to gather all his wandering wits at the still point of the soul - in between and behind the two eyes - where time and Timelessness intersect, before the spirit comes to its own and launches upon the Sea of Life for an inner journey homeward. This, in fact, has been the sole theme of all sages and seers everywhere. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/MasterQuotes.htm)

A Guru has in His charge the means of bringing the souls back to God. Although only those accepted by the Lord Himself are eligible for this inner path to the Source, yet they must get the key of the door from the Guru, who not only opens the way, but guides the soul through and on the extent of the entire journey. (ruhanisatsangusa.org/mortal-form.htm)
When a true Master accepts a disciple, that person’s status changes. We were lost wanderers whom not one befriended; accepted by the Satguru, we were then recognized. He becomes an “accepted” soul, under the care of the Master. (Sant Kirpal Singh, ruhanisatsangusa.org/gurumukh.htm)

Kirpalct@yahoo.com

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