



September 2001 Contemplation Theme

## Reunion

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There is a priceless moment imbedded in the experience of greeting a loved one when they arrive at the airport. The Vijnana Bhairava describes this as one of the 112 shortcuts to bliss — reunion. When you suddenly see someone that you have been missing, a wonderful feeling arises inside. The reunion happens because two who had been separate now come together again. The Sanskrit word for this is “yoga.” Yoga means union, which is technically a reunion. The two meeting at the airport were once together, were separated, and now they are meeting again. The meeting again is the greatest ecstasy of all. This yoga text says, “Seize upon the feeling! Forget the friend!” Because once the hellos and the hugs are over, you begin catching up on all the problems in each other’s lives. Everything is downhill after that initial ecstasy of reunion.

The ancient sages describe this as being the principle underlying the creation of the universe. If the universe began with a “Big Bang” — what was there before the bang? There had to be something that went bang. What was it? Whatever name you ascribe to it, it is the source of the bang and the source of the universe. It continues to exist throughout the universe. It will absorb it all into itself again at the end of time. Yoga calls it Shiva and says that Shiva decided to “Bang!” The bang is a movement of Shiva, that is the energy that becomes the atoms, which then become everything that exists — by taking on a seeming separation. In other words, everything that exists (including you) is a form of Shiva, but does not know it is a form of Shiva. There is this seeming separation.

Yoga is the inner union. Yoga is the internal coming together, so you know again whom you have always been. You do not become someone else. You come home to who you have always been — the Self. Realization is exactly what it is named — you realize you have always been divine consciousness, but in an individualized form. “Oh, I am That. Of course.” These are not esoteric teachings that are distant from you and hard to reach. This is about how you feel and about who you are — every day. Some days, you just don’t feel like yourself. There’s a disconnect inside. Yoga is the plugging in – into the Source inside. One of the most frequent comments I hear is, “I feel like I have come home.” The Shavasana at the end of class can take you to that deep inner dimension where you find yourself as the Self. It truly feels like coming home, on the inside. All the yoga practices are for the purpose of creating this inner experience. They are also really good for your body – but it is the inner dimension that is named by the word “yoga.”

All this is why, on the outside, we love reunions. September is a traditional time of reunion. The summer is ended and you get back to your regular routine. It’s wonderful to get back to the familiar — especially if you have been away from your yoga classes for a while. “Absence makes the heart grow fonder” can apply to yoga as well. That first class you take after you have been away feels so-o-o good. Fortunately, it just keeps getting better. Yoga is the only thing that I have ever found that keeps getting better, no matter how long I have been doing it.

Before I found yoga, I explored in many directions. Each foray showed me that it offered only limited happiness. I got to where I could figure this out in shorter and shorter time spans. I reached the point that I would start in a whole new direction and exhaust it within just six weeks. I began to wonder if I was going crazy! Then I found yoga. After six weeks, I was amazed to find that I was still interested. After six months, I could see that this was a deep well for me to drink from. One day, sitting on the side of my bed in the ashram (residential yoga center) in India, I realized I had been doing this for six years. At that point I thought, “Maybe this is a bottomless well.” Now I know – It is.

Namaste,