



..... SEVERIN BERZ

The spiritual approach is an invitation to become more alive, more aware of how we function, and more alert to our environment. It can help us to allow life to shine through us by displaying the various facets of our personality, our abilities, and a wide range of emotional reactions.

It is an invitation to accept the emotion of the moment, with its own rhythm and intensity, instead of giving in to our impulse to judge what is good or bad, or too fast or too slow, or what is welcome and what is not. In many spiritual approaches, a separation is made between spirituality and the body. Frequently, one of the consequences of this division is that the body is repressed. Either people try to ignore their personality, or they try to mould it to a set of morals or spiritual codes.

A black and white photograph showing a person's hands playing a singing bowl. The hands are positioned to strike and sustain the sound of the bowl. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the hands and the smooth surface of the bowl.

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Our conditioned, restricted, vulnerable and mortal body points, by the presentiment towards our more subtle being. The latter, due to its energetic quality, is infinite, unlimited, free and immortal. The body is designed to absorb, transform and expel different stimulations and emotions at its own pace, in accordance with its own limits and reality. And yet, if we learn how to listen and to detect its subtle signals, it can become an excellent barometer. Our bodies can help us understand how we react to different situations and how our personal will tries to impose its own rhythm and value system in the face of our physical reality. By listening intently, we can learn to recognize either a routine or an impulsive, reflex movement centered in our personal sphere indicative of the triumph of our personal will. When the body is set free, we witness spontaneous reactions in perfect harmony with the needs of our environment, emerging from the unknown.

In non-dual approaches, the body and personality are integral parts of the spiritual path. Our bodies and personalities are indeed very limited and only constitute the most superficial part of our being. They are nevertheless an inseparable part of our unity. One of the wonderful things about non-dual approaches is their theoretical and conceptual simplicity, which acts as a strong incentive to exploration and sensory integration. Nonetheless, the same simplicity may also foster complacency unless it goes hand in hand with a genuine, body-awareness or consciousness-based practice. Traditional body practices generally require such accuracy and fluidity of movement that they are impossible to perform with a fragmented consciousness, focused either on the self or on just one part of the body. Only a unified consciousness, free of either intention or fear, is capable of celebrating the beauty of the art. Jerky movements, full of efforts, reveal our limitations, whereas fluid, unbroken movements, containing both subtlety and power, are indicative of an absence of individual action or intent.

At the beginning of our lives, we possess a non-dual consciousness of the world. Then, as we learn to function in a world of things and human exchanges, we must learn to identify with our own bodies and character traits, and to use our bodies to control our emotions. This learned self-control helps us to avoid expressing emotions with an unregulated body, which could have disproportionate, even chaotic consequences for ourselves and for our environment. Once we reach adulthood, and we are fully conditioned not to transgress certain limits, we can begin to challenge the self-control we have tried so hard to acquire. We can choose to pursue a spiritual approach that allows us to discover with confidence the free and spontaneous emergence of our personality as it interacts with others.

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-Daniel Oldier

-Eric Baret

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