

# Samanya Dharma Workbook

## Unit 1 – Introduction: Rules of Play

### Part 1: Introduction

**(Note:** Each section title will be designated with a three-digit number for ease of reference. The first number will reference the unit, the second number will reference the part, and the third number will reference the section itself.)

#### 1.1.1 – How to Meditate

Meditation in its most basic form is very easy to learn. In fact, it can be taught in about 20 seconds. Here, let's try it.

#### Opening Exercise:

##### **Basic Form of Meditation**

All you need to do to meditate is to just sit down somewhere and relax.

Now, notice your own breathing. Keep focusing on it.

When you get distracted from your breath, just notice whatever distracted you.

Then take a deep breath, let that distraction go, and return to noticing your breathing.

**Try this for 5 minutes or longer.**

That only took about 20 seconds to teach. But how helpful was the actual practice?

- Did you experience that as calming?
- What about wandering thoughts?
- Disturbed emotions?
- Insecurity?

- Excessive distractions?
- A sense of it taking a long time?

Even though it's **simple** to learn, meditating in this way can be **very difficult** to master. And in the end, you may experience only a **mild improvement** in your overall sense of well-being. This is because the Basic Form does little to address the struggle in your underlying emotions or the actual **cause** of your suffering.

### Problems with the Basic Form

- Your thoughts are wandering because your **emotions** are disturbed.
- Your thoughts are like the tip of an iceberg; beneath them are your unhappy emotions.
- Meditating on your own disturbed emotions with no way to **resolve** them is no fun!
- Letting go of your thoughts, desires, and feelings is really hard to do!
- Letting go of your thoughts, desires and feelings is actually a **bad idea**.
- Why? Because forcing your mind to be calm **without first** dealing with your unhappy emotions will just **suppress** them and make your body sick.
- I know... because that's exactly what happened to me.

### 1.1.2 – Who Is Muki?

- My parents were spiritual seekers.
- Fasting, praying, and meditation began when I was six-years old.
- Lots of visions and strange spiritual experiences as a child.
- Profound awakening when I was eight-years old.
- Became very shy and introspective - wanted to find that bliss again.
- Started diligent practice at age 17; spiritual experiences intensified.
- Succeeded at stopping my mind in college, but I did not heal my emotions.
- Already a sick child, but my suppressed emotions made me much sicker.
- Finally learned to calm and heal my emotions through meditation.
- Had a dream in which my spiritual guide taught me a special form of meditation.
- Intense spiritual awakenings in May and October of 2018. Karmic release.
- My mind became situated in Heaven.
- I was told to teach by Spirit, so here I am!

### 1.1.3 Spirituality

This course accepts and assumes that **reincarnation is real**, based on the massive amount of **evidence** that exists to support this assumption. Most people are unaware that the scientific case for reincarnation is very strong. [Read this article](#) about the groundbreaking work of Dr. Ian Stevenson in this field. I also highly recommend the book, *Journey of Souls*, by Dr. Michael Newton. If we can say that reincarnation is real, then it **must also be true** that the soul is real, and an afterlife is real. There is such a solid case for all three claims that it would now take much **more work to disprove** these phenomena than to simply **accept** them as real and move on. Of more personal importance in convincing me of the reality of the spiritual world are my **own experiences** traveling beyond the body during my meditation practices. I invite you to do the same, and I will gladly show you how.

### 1.1.4 – Beliefs Matter

Whatever beliefs and feelings you **bring into** your meditation, that is what you will be focusing on and confirming. If you are sad when you meditate, your meditation will bring that sadness **into focus**. If you don't have the **wisdom** you need to heal your inner struggle while you meditate, then all you will be doing while you meditate is sitting there with your unhappiness, with no way to resolve it. That's not a fun experience at all! And it's **counterproductive**. Meditating with the same beliefs that **created** your suffering without a means to resolve your unhappy feelings will only **reinforce** them.

The outer always reflects the inner, and the inner reflects the outer. When you look **outside** yourself and see only **ugliness** in the world, then when you **look within**, that is also what you will see. The reverse is also true - if we look inside and see only beauty, then what we will see in the world will also be **beautiful**.

When our bodies eventually die, this is also what will happen - whatever beliefs and feelings we **hold strongly** at that time of our death is what we will **continue** to experience in the afterlife. If what we believe conflicts with the **actual truth** of what is real in the afterlife, then what we experience in the afterlife won't last forever... but it might seem like it.

Meditation is thus a **doorway** to happiness in the afterlife. By **aligning** our beliefs and feelings with what is actually real about the afterlife during our meditation, we can collapse the illusory space between the inner and outer, the outer and inner - we can actually experience the reality of the afterlife while we are still **alive**. And the reality of the afterlife – the Truth that is waiting for us – is absolutely blissful! By aligning ourselves with this Truth through meditation, we can make death a **beautiful transition** into bliss. And through meditation, we can even awaken to the bliss of Heaven before we die. We can go visit Heaven while we are still here on Earth. We can go Home. And once we know our way Home, we can always return again.

## The purpose of meditation is to establish lasting happiness.

Meditation is the practical application of wisdom towards the goal of lasting happiness.

**Wisdom** is a set of beliefs that, when **practically applied** to one's life, lead to lasting happiness.

- If we want to experience lasting happiness, we must have happy beliefs.
- We must also have beliefs based on what is True, or our house of happiness will be built on **sand**. It will not last.

Lasting happiness can be **defined** as:

1. Ending all of your miseries.
2. Knowing your way Home.

### 1.1.5 – The Five Forms of Meditation

Modern meditation training is usually called “mindfulness.” But this name isn't quite correct. What most people call “mindfulness meditation,” or just “meditation,” is actually a specific form of meditation that should be called “concentration practice.” In fact, there are actually five forms of meditation, which are as follows:

#### The Five Forms of Meditation

1. **Contemplation**– Studying the Truth
2. **Mindfulness** – Choosing the Truth
3. **Concentration** – Focusing on the Truth
4. **Energetics** – Connecting with the Truth
5. **Communion** – Becoming the Truth

Although exceptions are sometimes appropriate, by and large it is important that each of these forms of meditation should be learned in the order that they appear above.

These forms of meditation are taught by Muki as a complete teaching of meditation, which he calls “Samanya Dharma.” Samanya Dharma simply means, “universal truth,” or “universal path to happiness.”

Let's take some time to define and explain each of these forms of meditation, one by one.

## Contemplation: The Art of Studying the Truth

- **Techniques:** Studying involves reading, attending lectures, engaging in dialogue with fellow students and qualified instructors, etc.
- **Purpose:** Your old ideas have given you your present state of negativity and misery. It is therefore necessary to explore new ideas.
- **Importance:** Contemplation is the most basic and necessary form of meditation. It is not possible to choose, focus, connect with, or become one with the Truth **without** first learning and studying the Truth. Those who refuse to study are rare - almost every human being is curious to learn more about Truth of life, if for no other reason than to end their suffering. But some do stubbornly refuse to learn. Don't lose hope in the slow learners! Eventually, their own suffering will spur them on to seek new ideas. In time, we will all finally learn the Truth. Don't worry – everyone will find their way to the Truth in time.
- **Practice:** Studying the Truth is something we do **all the time**, whether we realize it or not. In fact, you are doing it right **now**. Reading this workbook is a form of study. But contemplation is something we can do all day long. Think hard about the truths contained in this course. And look **outside** this course for wisdom as well. Keep looking for **new ideas** until you find the ones that can help you to heal and be happy. The goal of this course is to significantly **speed up** that search for you through this teaching.
- **Cautions:** Study can often take time and patience. But it's a critical first step on your journey towards lasting happiness. How can you put into practice a truth that you never took the time to **learn**? How can we have lasting happiness if it is built on **confusion** instead of **clarity**? Yet this process can be difficult – so difficult, that many spiritual teachers often say that we cannot ever really learn the Truth. But actually, that is not true. Do not be tempted to believe you are incapable of knowing the answers to life's Big Questions. We **can** know the Truth, because if there is such a thing as the Truth Itself, we are not outside of it. If there is such a thing as the Truth Itself, then it must **include** each of us as well. And if the Truth includes you, then you are a **part** of it, which means you are **one** with it. And if you are one with the Truth, then you can know it, because it is **YOU**. Most of us think we are separate from the Truth, but that's like a wave on the ocean thinking it is separate from the Ocean. But that makes no sense at all. The wave can pretend to be separate from the Ocean, which would be a little scary. It can think it's going to die when it crashes into rocks, or other waves, or the shore. But when it finally does so, it laughs as it remembers that it was actually not just a wave, but rather, it was the whole Ocean all along. You have always been a part of the Truth, and you will eventually remember this. It's just a matter of time. How long do you want to dream of being a wave that is separate from the Ocean? And when you finally do learn the Truth,

that will mean an end to your confusion. When your confusion ends, we call that “**enlightenment**.” Thus, the goal of contemplation practice is enlightenment.

## Mindfulness: The Art of Choosing

- **Techniques:** This art involves mentally or verbally repeating or chanting “mantras,” which is another name for an affirmation of truth. The goal is to take a truth and repeat it until the mind accepts it.
- **Purpose:** Mindfulness trains your mind to choose the Truth and **keep it** with you. We want to fold the Truth into our being, such that it becomes a part of our understanding. We want the **Truths** we have learned to eventually become so ingrained within our being, that they become a part of our character; they form our core beliefs. They become the basis of our **attitudes**, such that they become **automatic** responses to life. Through the practice of mindfulness, the **difference** between who we are and the Truth itself should eventually **disappear**.
- **Importance:** Mindfulness allows for the practical application of knowledge learned in study, and therefore it allows for wisdom. What **good** does the wisdom you have studied do for you if you do not decide to **choose** it?
- And mindfulness is meant to be practiced at **all times**. Do we want to be mindful of love and kindness only once and a while? Do we want to be mindful of other people’s feelings only a couple minutes each day, or all day long?

Studying the truth without actually *choosing* the truth that has been studied is, unfortunately, very **commonplace** behavior. Many people can tell you the Golden Rule, for example, but very few actually live by its words on a constant basis. This makes no sense. **What good** does it do you to be kind during the church service, but then curse people under your breath on the road as soon as you leave the church grounds? You are affirming **ugliness**, not wisdom. Without mindfulness, whatever you have learned in study **stays** wherever you learned it.

Some people may spend their whole life studying, and yet never acquire any wisdom, because they **never practiced** mindfulness; whereas, others may learn very little, but succeed at finding happiness, because they **wisely chose** to practice all day long what little they may have learned.

- **Practice:** Mindfulness should be practiced at **all times**. When would it be a good time *not* to be mindful of the truth? Your mind should never abandon wisdom. Mindfulness starts when you **open your eyes** in the morning. Eventually, it continues even when you sleep. When the truth becomes like a spontaneous **song** within you, you will know that it has been successfully **folded** into your being. The ultimate test is that you now believe this truth so much that it is an integral part of your mind. It becomes an **attitude**. And then it becomes **you**.

- **Cautions:** If the truth you have chosen does not create happiness, you should abandon it immediately. Trial and error is a part of the process.

## Concentration: The Art of Focus

- **Techniques:** When we think of “meditation,” our minds probably grab an image of the Buddha seated quietly in full lotus position, hands folded in his lap, with a gentle smile on his face. This is the classic image of concentration practice. This is the form of meditation that most people think of as being what they will learn in this class. But this form of meditation does you no good if you do not first learn contemplation and mindfulness. How will you focus on the truth if you have not first learned it, and also chosen it deep within your being?
- **Requirements:** The art of focus through concentration first requires mastery of contemplation, then mastery of mindfulness, such that you can tackle your deep inner struggle in a focused, determined way.
- **Purpose:** Concentration practice can be useful when life becomes very difficult; when emotions run high, and you need to steady yourself in the face of conflict. Concentration practice can also be practiced through a long “sit,” when you take the time to be with your emotions and heal them in a deliberate way. This practice of intentionally sitting with your inner struggle is fundamental to the work of establishing lasting happiness. It is where we do the work ending our miseries. And eventually, concentration practice can help you see through the ugliness of the world, and even awaken to the Truth of Heaven itself. Concentration practice is thus the beginning of the process of “awakening,” which means knowing your way Home.
- **Importance:** Concentration practice is the most important form of meditation for the development of **mastery** - over our perceptions, emotions, thoughts, and other choices. And yet, for those that are naturally good at mindfulness, or who live lives free of distraction, or who are very spiritually advanced from the get go, it may be the case that the practice of concentration may not be very necessary or important for them. But **most of us** in the modern world have minds that are **wildly distracted** and very badly trained. The **monkey-mind** metaphor is quite appropriate. Most especially, most of us suffer from such an ugly mix of **emotions** that we need to practice concentration in order to **release** and resolve those feelings.

Once our emotions are healed, it is delightful to have a calm and **useful** mind. It certainly allows for better energetic and communion practices.

It is important to **actively notice** what you are observing during concentration practice. Noticing with intent, or what has been called “noting,” is best accomplished by mentally or even verbally stating the fact that you are observing something, until the habit of **noting** becomes ingrained and **automatic**.

- **Practice:** Concentration practice is usually done in sessions that are called “sittings,” or just “sits,” in which you designate a specific place and time for **intentional** inner observation. In subsequent classes I will teach you an advanced form of concentration practice that will be **much more** effective than the basic form we practiced earlier.
- **Cautions:** Concentration practice should not be undertaken without first learning and choosing the Truth via study and mindfulness. Practicing concentration practice without first learning or choosing the Truth is like **sharpening your knife** without actually knowing how to cook. You might look impressive standing there with your apron and chef’s hat and that sharp knife, but the food you actually prepare will **not taste good**, and the process will be **unpleasant** for you and everyone else. Focused concentration on folly, no matter how impressively and skillfully you demonstrate your focus, is still **foolish**. In fact, all the more so. Concentrate on **wisdom**, and you will become wise.

### Energetics: The Art of Connecting

- **Techniques:** This art involves all of the techniques of the previous forms, plus more advanced breathwork, movements, vocalizations, and visualizations.
- **Purpose:** Energy is simply movement of the mind. You have thus far moved your mind far away from your true home, which is an eternal state of bliss; it is now time to move it back where it **belongs**. Because you currently **limit** your mind to existing in a tiny space called the human body, and sometimes only a tiny part of this tiny space - the place behind your eyes and between your ears - it is necessary to do **significant** work to expand your sense of awareness beyond those limitations.
- **Importance:** Normally, we learn energetics only **after** we have practiced concentration, but when our energy is too crazy, it’s hard to concentrate on anything, so sometimes it is a **good idea** to do some simple energetics exercises to **ground** ourselves. Once you get good at concentration practice, you can really have fun with energetics. You can even learn how to use energetics to move the mind **outside** the body, such that you may travel to higher planes of awareness and connect with higher minds.
- **Practice:** Energetics practice is probably the most fun form of meditation, and it can be really easy to learn. During energetics practice, you will learn how to **move your mind** around the body, releasing tension and pain, and connecting to energy centers known as **chakras**. In this class, we will also learn how to **visualize** and create a more harmonious and beautiful world through energetics.
- **Cautions:** Certain energetic practices are dangerous for the mind and body, and are not to be toyed with until you have thoroughly mastered study, mindfulness, and



concentration practices. The practices we will employ in this class **are all safe** to employ at any time.

### Communion Practice: The Art of Becoming

- **Techniques:** This art includes techniques such as prayer, fasting, lucid dreaming and astral travel, remote viewing, various mystical practices, baptism, vision quests, ecstatic dance, and hallucinogenic drugs.
- **Purpose:** Communion practice allows for the ultimate experience of perfect spiritual union with Love itself, which is experienced as **bliss**.
- **Importance:** Once you have experienced union with Love itself, and can do so consistently, it is very hard not to be a very happy person.
- **Practice:** The careful choice of wisdom and consistent, programmatic practice of the previous four forms of meditation - as taught within this class - will ultimately lead to **direct** communion with Love itself.

In addition, the correct use of prayer is definitely something we will discuss. Prayer is perhaps the most simple and effective form of communion. Fasting will also be recommended, although this method must be approached with care not to do injury to the body. Deeper and prolonged spiritual retreats can be also helpful.

We should do all that we can via energetics to reach out and connect to the Truth, and we should work **diligently** to make ourselves into a vessel of Love that can heal the world. However, throughout this process, we must understand that communion practice is ultimately a practice in **receptivity**. Union with the Truth **cannot** be forced. One cannot **take** love; one simply receives. We may sit patiently at the doorstep of Love and knock; but the One who opens the door has the freedom to choose when it would **be best** to let you in. The basis for that choice is *never* made from a place of punishment or revenge - Love **could do no such thing**. Instead, this decision is always made from an infinitely good and perfect wisdom that is always considering **your best interests**, and what it weighs in that moment of your arrival Home is how best to avoid frightening you.

Most of us have no concept of the incomparable **vastness** of our own being. The truth is, a complete union with the infinite is probably not something you are prepared to experience at present. The **death** of your smallness, your struggle, your pride - all of that cannot be thrust upon you. Of course, Love will protect you in that moment of union with the infinite, but that holy instant should only come when you are **ready**. We must accept Love's wisdom with **grace**; trying instead to grab at Grace itself is actually a bit rude. Be graceful, and you will receive grace. Love cannot make the choice to surrender your ego for you - **only you** can do that. So, this is in fact the work of this class - to ready you for

union with the Truth, which is actually the **radiant glory** and wondrous perfection of **your own** infinite awareness.

**Subud:** My own communion practice for thirty years until present is via the *latihan kejiwaan of Subud*. We normally just referred to it as the “**latihan**,” which is pronounced “lah-TEE-hawn.” This unique practice is almost totally unknown to the world, yet it is by far and away the **most direct** and uncluttered path to spiritual communion that can be found, so far as I am aware. The latihan takes you to the front door of Love itself and quite literally **opens** it, even if you have not done the work to get there. In this form of communion practice, it is the Divine that works **on you**. Of course, this could only be possible by Divine will, and the presence and work of the Divine is **quite clear** during the experience. The **presence** of the Divine is felt as a subtle inner vibration that gently yet clearly **awakens** a feeling of spiritual restoration within you. The practitioner remains in a passive yet **completely conscious** state, simply **allowing** this healing vibration to move and awaken the body, the emotions, the intellect, and finally and the soul itself, usually in that order. The latihan is **how** I know what I know, and it is **why** I teach what I teach. Although this practice will be discussed during this class, it will not be “taught,” as it is **not teachable**, nor will it be practiced, as doing so is not allowed unless you are already a member of the Subud community. But it is most definitely **worth knowing** something about the latihan, and about the gentle folk in Subud who quietly keep its flame alive.

- **Cautions:** I do not endorse and **highly advise against** the use of drugs or other hallucinogens chemical stimulants to assist in communion practice - they can make a mess of people who are not prepared for the experience. I’ve seen too many **ruined lives** to count. Awakening **without first** attaining enlightenment and mastery often ends badly, and can even be disastrous. Don’t be in **such a hurry** to experience awakening via communion practice. Everything in its proper time and place.

## 1.1.6 – Requirements for this Class

Much of the practice of meditation centers around releasing old, negative attitudes while developing new, happier attitudes. An **attitude** is a belief that you have chosen until it has become part of who you are. Happiness itself is an attitude - how can you develop happiness without **changing** your unhappy attitude? The development of positive attitudes actually requires that you have already developed five, **special** attitudes before you even start the class. Without these **pre-existing** attitudes, there is no way to move forward with any kind of learning. The five attitudes necessary to **succeed** in this class - and in life - are called the **Five Requirements**, and they are as follows:

1. **Openness** – A willingness to Learn
2. **Skepticism** – A willingness to Question
3. **Experimentation** – A willingness to Test
4. **Acceptance** – A willingness to Agree

## 5. **Concession** – A willingness to Concede

Let's take them one by one.

### **Openness: A Willingness to Learn**

Openness means that you are always willing to continue learning, and to give each truth that is shared herein its **due consideration**, even if at first it seems objectionable. Openness never means you have to agree - it just means you are **willing to listen**. If you wish to acquire the wisdom shared in this class, you must at least be willing to give this teaching some of your **time**. No learning is possible without an open mind.

### **Skepticism – A Willingness to Question**

Skepticism means you are willing to learn, but you intend to question **and doubt** everything until it is **proven** to you. Please do so; that is just as it should be. If you do not doubt and ask questions, but instead just **trust** and listen, you may not know **enough** in the end to help others, or even yourself. Skepticism also serves us in other important ways:

- **Appeasement:** Skepticism will protect you from your own deep internal belief that you are not actually **worthy** of experiencing lasting happiness. You can appease your doubting mind by telling it you won't believe this teaching until it's been satisfactorily proven to you. Good! That's exactly the point of meditation. Meditation is the practice of discovering the truth **for yourself**. I have zero interest in you just learning all about how wonderfully happy I am - I want *you* to experience lasting happiness. In fact, if your lack of **self-worth** is really intense, just tell your doubting mind that you're only here to prove to the world that this whole class is a **crock** of you-know-what. Of course, in order to really prove me wrong about this whole lasting happiness idea, you'll need to actually study my material and **try my methods**... The proof really is in the pudding, and I'm more than fine with that approach. Just know that it's **okay** to be skeptical if it helps to calm your internal fears and lack of confidence.
- **False Success:** Some people stop progressing in their meditation when they think they have achieved something extraordinary, when in fact they still have a long way to go. Be skeptical of your own successes until there is no "you" left to be skeptical, but only the bliss of our oneness.

### **Experimentation: A Willingness to Test**

An attitude of experimentation means that you are willing to put the truth that you have learned to the test. **How else** can you really know if the truth I taught you actually makes you happier? The temptation to just **believe and not practice** is seductive, especially when the truth that I share with you is immediately helpful at resolving our confusion. But don't just understand - *know*. There is a huge **difference** between knowing something **conceptually** versus **experientially**. What would you rather do - think about eating cookies, or actually eat the

cookies? Once you have read this material and **questioned it** to your satisfaction, you will need to give its methods a try.

### Acceptance: A willingness to Agree

Once you have not only understood a truth, but also **put it to the test** and discovered that it indeed **holds up** as a source of wisdom, then it is necessary that you accept this truth as **valid**. If you know a truth to be **helpful** in bringing you to happiness, but you still **refuse** to actually accept what you know, then your knowledge is of **no use** to you at all. Denial of the truth is **denial** of your own happiness.

### Concessr: A willingness to Concede

Surrender means you are willing to let go of your **false beliefs** after you yourself have **proven** them to be false. False beliefs are the opposite of wisdom; they are **folly**, and they lead to misery. If you continue holding onto false beliefs out of **pride**, even when you know better, then you have **only yourself** to thank for your continued misery. When you hold onto **contradictory** beliefs, you stand in contradiction with yourself. Accepting what is true and surrendering what is **false** is necessary if you wish to be happy.

## 1.1.7 – The Five Orientations

Meditation is like **driving** - it is not hard to learn, but it will most definitely be a better overall experience for yourself and others if you first go to driving school and **take some time** to memorize the rules. The way you **behave** in driving school is often a good predictor of the kind of **driver** you will be on the road. The teacher observes that if their student's **energy** is reactive and disruptive in class, they are likely to act the **same way** behind the wheel. People also show up to meditation class in varying states of energetic orientation. It is necessary for the student of meditation to **recognize** their own tendencies towards one energetic state or another during their meditation training, and to **adjust themselves** accordingly. Because this adjustment is sometimes difficult, a good teacher of meditation will **help** their students to recognize their own energetic orientation and **guide** them in an appropriate fashion. There are five energetic orientations that people tend to gravitate to, which I call the **Five Orientations**, and they are as follows:

1. **Reactive** – The Crisis Mode
2. **Empathic** – The Victim Mode
3. **Intellectual** – The Reasoning Mode
4. **Somatic** – The Movement Mode
5. **Integrative** – The Ideal Mode

Let's take them one by one, while continuing to use our driving metaphor.

## Reactive: The Crisis Mode

Reactive people get in their car in a state of **extreme urgency** and drive like they own the road. Their driving is often **impaired** by lack of sleep or just excessive stress, **anger**, and frustration. They may even be impaired by drugs - legally prescribed, or otherwise - or alcohol. Even if they are not chemically impaired, they react **aggressively** towards everyone else around them by speeding, **tailgating** (which is equivalent to holding a gun to someone's head just so you can get to your destination 3-minutes faster), zipping in and out of lanes, and cutting people off. These people are a **danger** to themselves and to others, and they really **should not** be behind the wheel. Reactive individuals **typically** (there are exceptions) do not do well in a classroom environment, and they should seek **one-on-one** meditation training. Oftentimes, those who constantly orient towards **crisis** are actually suffering from severe emotional stress or **trauma**, and they may need the help of a qualified psychologist or therapist (I highly recommend one who specializes in EMDR) to help **untangle** and heal their inner wounds.

## Empathic: The Victim Mode

Some people get behind the wheel of their car in a state of high **emotional** sensitivity. They get easily **distracted** and upset by others who drive badly. They are constantly asking, **why me?** Why would you treat me this way? They tend to **blame** others for their own emotional condition. By driving this way, they can become quite stressed out and unhappy, and they might even become **triggered** to drive from a place of **reactivity** themselves. Their day is often **ruined** by the driving experience. The empathic student will find that the basic form of meditation - simply observing your breath - does **little** to help them feel better. What they really need is a meditation training that can help them deal with their emotional **sensitivity**. This class will do exactly that.

## Intellectual: The Reasoning Mode

The **reasonable** driver gets behind the wheel and takes it all in stride. They are **cautious**, careful drivers, and they make sure to follow the law. They may mutter their disapproval of all of the other drivers who don't know how to **follow the rules** of the road, but they **rarely react** negatively. They are usually **safe** drivers, but they sometimes drive too **slow**, or lack the flexibility to adjust to unusual driving conditions. They pull in front of someone who is speeding because they think the **law** is on their side, or they **clog up** a single lane highway when they don't want to move with the flow of traffic just because it's moving faster than the speed limit. The intellectual student of meditation initially makes **great strides** in the classroom environment, but then they **stall out** when it comes to putting what they learned into **practice**. They need to ease up on the brake pedal and actually do the practical work of meditation.

## Somatic: The Movement Mode

The somatic driver likes the **thrill** of the open road and the pleasures of driving a beautiful car. They love the **sport** of driving fast. They usually prefer to be on a motorcycle rather than in a stuffy sedan, and they will drive a minivan like it's a Maserati. They consider themselves to be excellent drivers, and they often are, but their **skill** behind the wheel is **no excuse** for turning the

highway into a **racetrack**. The somatic student of meditation will totally lack the patience necessary to sit through the lecture part of their training. They will stare out the window, fidget, talk and **distract others**, and they will ask the teacher when the “actual” meditation is going to start. Typically, they will abandon their meditation class in favor of yoga, Qigong, Tai Chi, dance, running, sports, or other more **physical** forms of meditation. This student needs to learn how to apply the brake, listen, be patient, and study the material. Too often, the somatic student will find that they have **no ability** to keep themselves calm and happy when they **injure** their bodies and have to take a break from their exercise regimen. The fact is, a good student of meditation should be able to practice meditation **regardless** of the health of their body, even while lying in a hospital bed. So long as you are conscious and know what you are doing, you should be able to meditate. Eventually, you will even learn how to meditate in your sleep.

### **Integrative: The Ideal Mode**

The integrative driver has learned how to operate their car in a **balanced** way, avoiding the pitfalls of the reactive, empathic, intellectual, and somatic styles of driving. They know how to keep themselves **calm**, and they may even find driving to be relaxing. They don't speed, but they don't shy away from moving with the speed of traffic. They **avoid confrontation** on the road, and they effectively **manage** their emotional response to aggressive drivers. They follow the law, but they adjust well to unusual circumstances on the road. In short, they are the ideal drivers, and they are likewise the **ideal students** of meditation. However, the integrative student of meditation may find that they lack the **patience** to deal with the rest of their classmates who are not so integrative in their energetic orientation. This is a good opportunity for the practice of compassion. The integrative student often feels the need to be the **star** of the show. Don't be a **backseat driver**; instead, learn to honor and respect the spiritual journey of others. Be like a good passenger in the car, and offer your **support**, patience, and forgiveness to the other students. Let the teacher manage the situation as best they can, and **quietly** take note of the other students' failings to help you become a better teacher yourself one day. The road ahead is long, and we sometimes find our orientation changes from time to time - it may be that one day **you will need** the same compassion from others.

It is worth noting that the **first** orientation can be applied to any of the following three, but not the fifth. For example, someone who orients towards the intellect can find themselves becoming **highly reactive**, especially if their intellectual **capacity** is challenged. Likewise, people of a somatic orientation can express their physicality in quite dangerous ways if they are triggered. Yet, someone who is **truly integrative** is by definition unlikely to become reactive. Here's a quick reference guide to managing your own orientation:

1. *Reactive?* Not safe behind the wheel. Seek individual training.
2. *Empathic?* You are the distracted driver. Pay attention.
3. *Intellectual?* You are the brake pedal. Keep going.
4. *Somatic?* You are the accelerator. Slow down.

5. *Integrative?* You are the passenger - be quiet and supportive.

## 1.1.8 – The Five Disclaimers

I am aware that much of what I share in this training may be considered **spiritually edgy**, and might ruffle a few feathers. There may be attempts to negatively label me or this teaching in one way or another. People are **100% free** to think what they think, and I have **already** forgiven whatever ugliness may come my way. However, in order to **reduce** the amount of collective disharmony out there, I will attempt to address some of the obvious concerns in advance via the following **Five Disclaimers**:

1. **Perfection** - There is no such thing as a perfect teacher.
2. **Fairness** - Everyone is to be treated equally.
3. **Truth** - This teaching does not claim to be the Truth itself.
4. **Medical** - This teaching is not a substitute for medical care.
5. **Religion** - This is not a religion.

Let's take them one by one.

### 1. There is no such thing as a perfect teacher.

We cannot **project** our inner perfection into an **imperfect world**. Although I know my Highest Self to be quite perfect, I cannot avoid making mistakes while pretending to be a human being in this illusory universe. No one can. And that's just as it should be. The imperfection of this world is what **challenges** us and allows us to grow. *Why would I ever want to stop learning?* Mastery is an endless process, and I humbly **own** and seek to learn from every one of my pitfalls and stumbles. I hope you will forgive my mistakes, just as I forgive yours, and although I **do my best** to avoid creating disharmony around me, please allow me some **wiggle room** to screw up every now and then. Please note that **I am not** the real Teacher, anyway; the real Teacher is quite perfect, and **always** will be.

### 2. Everyone is to be treated equally.

There is to be **no discrimination** based on ideas or identity in this course towards anyone by anyone. That includes political or religious affiliation, gender or sexual orientation, age, race, nationality, culture, skin color, disability, **or anything else** that would ignore our inherent individual importance, goodness, and equality. Students will learn to respect the **difference** between good **people** and bad **behavior**. Everyone is equally responsible for the care of our collective safety at all times. All instructors of this teaching are **also students**, and are always equal to the students, and vice versa. If you plan on becoming an instructor, which I hope you do, keep that in mind. Also, know that you **do not need to participate** in class, and you will never be required to do so, or shamed if you do not. You are always entirely free to come and go as you please, and **no offense** will be taken either way; on the contrary, you will always be considered to be equal in every way and **loved** accordingly. Mistakes will happen - please be forgiving, and **let**

**us know** if we have been insensitive in any way. We will make corrections accordingly. We will strive to uphold the following motto:

*Love cannot punish. Love cannot force itself upon you.  
Love must be chosen. Choose wisely.*

### 3. This teaching does not claim to be the Truth itself.

Samanya Dharma is shared as a collection of truths that **point** to a path of lasting happiness. However, language is always **symbolic**, and so is the truth. Even the highest possible expression of the “Truth” must **always** point to something else. Due to these natural constraints of **language** and the **ineffable** quality of the truth, this teaching **does not ever** claim to be the truth itself. No teaching ever could, though they may claim otherwise.

But let’s be clear, we can indeed speak of there being an **ultimate reality**, in that an ultimate reality **must exist**. And this ultimate reality is not only real, but it is knowable. **You can** and will experience this ultimate reality in **meditation**, if you so choose. As we will learn in our next class:

*The truth of what is real cannot be spoken,  
yet it can be known, for it is you.*

So we must explore the truth and **experience** the truth, but we must do so while keeping in mind that the truth itself - or at least, that which it points to - remains **unspeakable**. In order to **effectively point** to what is true and avoid constant disclaimers, please note that **any time** I described a “truth” or the “Truth,” those **words** should always be taken to mean “a *symbolic reflection of the Truth itself, which is itself just a symbolic expression of an ultimate reality.*” Or something like that.

Also, please note the following truism:

*It is impossible to speak the Truth, yet it is wrong to lie.  
This is why life is funny.*

In keeping with our attitudes of experimentation and acceptance as **requirements** of learning, I would **strongly** encourage my students to treat every observation of the “truth” shared within this teaching as something to be **tested** directly by you, through your own meditation, before you actually accepted any of it as actually “true.”

### 4. This course is not a substitute for medical care.

Meditation training is **not** a replacement for mental or physical medical care. **Brain chemistry** matters - if your neurotransmitter levels are off, you may find that even with a high degree of enlightenment and mastery through your meditation, your ease of happiness may nevertheless be experienced as a **struggle**, as if you were constantly **swimming upstream**. Get that chemical



imbalance corrected under the care of a qualified healer. Try to avoid taking drugs to do so, if you can - there are many **natural, safe, and effective** options for promoting healthy serotonin, dopamine, and GABA levels, for example.

Severe **trauma** like sexual, mental, or physical abuse or **PTSD** can cause the student of meditation to struggle to integrate the mind and body. The fight or flight response takes over, and this can make study, mindfulness, and concentration practices very difficult. I **highly** recommend seeking out a **therapist** who is qualified and skilled in a therapeutic technique called **EMDR** (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). EMDR literally **resets** the communication and **integration** between the limbic system (fight or flight center of the brain) and the frontal lobes (thinking part of the brain), allowing your thoughts to be **orderly** again.

And of course, it is more difficult (but certainly not impossible) to meditate when you are not in a state of good physical health. This is all the more true if your health is in an acute state of illness or injury. If this is the case for you, **please prioritize** your health, first and foremost. That said, please don't wait until you are perfectly healthy to meditate. An unhealthy body may be a **distraction**, but we shouldn't let it keep us from our goals. Life is short, and the body eventually doesn't make it. Seeking health for health's own sake is not the point of life. Ultimately, we **cannot win** the game of health, but we **can win** the game of happiness. Optimally, we strive for both, but always with the understanding that the only purpose of a healthy body is to provide us with an **effective vehicle** for learning and teaching lasting **happiness** while in this world.

## 5. This is not a religion.

Although Samanya Dharma does claim to come from **divine** inspiration, and although this teaching may share **commonalities** with many religions in terms of content, I have **absolutely no interest** in it becoming a religion in any form. I utterly **reject** the development of dogma, a priesthood or acolytes, monks or a ministry, chapels or temples, ritual or ceremony, holy symbols, holy books, gurus, proselytizing, **special jargon**, secret handshakes, or any of the other trappings of organized religion around this teaching. Again, the whole point of meditation is to discover the **truth for yourself**, so that it may positively transform you for **your own benefit**, and for the benefit of those whom you **love**. How delightful! What about that requires the addition of pomp and circumstance? Let this be our maxim:

*No statement of religious dogma exists anywhere in this course, except for this one.*

To avoid any confusion between this teaching and a religion, it will be taught as a **cooperative game**. This game is meant to be fun. If this game ever stops being fun, take a break. All games are more fun if everyone who plays, **plays freely**. However, even when it's not fun, it still might be useful to continue playing, if only because the struggle may get you to a place of more fun eventually. That said, if this training just really isn't fun for you or useful, please stop playing and let us know. Your **feedback** is always appreciated.

## 1.1.9 – Samanya Dharma: The Universal Path of Lasting Happiness

**Samanya Dharma** is the formal name of this teaching. However, I did not come up with the name myself; it was **spoken** spontaneously out of my mouth during my **latihan** for years. I had no idea what it meant until I finally decided to actually Google its meaning.

**Universal:** Even though the words Samanya Dharma are of **Sanskrit** origin, this teaching does not belong to India, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. It **belongs** to everyone.

**Spiritual:** All the content of this teaching came to me during meditation, either through dreams, visions, or varying states of communion with spiritual teachers and/or direct communication with Spirit. It should be understood that Spirit is **always** the True Teacher of Samanya Dharma, and not I. This statement is made in full awareness how dodgy it is to make claims of divine inspiration. Please do not accept this claim as a matter of faith - doing so is unnecessary, not particularly helpful to your own spiritual development, and also outside of the requirements of this course. And yet, my claim is made quite sincerely - I am simply sharing what has been given to me with orders to share, and that is all.

**Teaching:** The only exception to this claim is that it was **entirely my idea** to turn this teaching into a game. Although this decision of mine is not being forbidden from on high, there is a real sense from Spirit that this approach is not what was intended. I am aware that treating this teaching as a game might make light of what was given to me, but I so utterly loathe the idea of Samanya Dharma being turned into something dreadful and serious, that I am willing to take the heat for this decision. Thankfully, Love Itself is perfectly forgiving. But do take note that the Teacher deserves credit where credit is due, but not for any of my silliness.

## Part 2: Rules of Play

### 1.2.1 – Meditation: Heaven and Earth

After a break in class, I like to **restart** us with a nice meditation. This exercise is one of the best for reconnecting and reestablishing our energy flow. It also heals our spiritual relationship with **Heaven and Earth** by allowing ourselves to become an energetic **conduit** of love between them.

## Reset Exercise:

### **Energetics Practice: "Heaven and Earth"**

Sit outside with your feet touching the Earth. If you can't, no worries. Anywhere is fine.

Imagine your mind reaching down to the center of the Earth.

Picture and feel a warm, white light and motherly presence.

Say "Hi" to Mother Earth and ask her for her healing light. Can you feel her response?

Pull her light up towards your feet.

Let it touch the bottoms of your feet and flow up the front of your body.

When it reaches the very top of your head, move it up into the sky.

When the light reaches Heaven, see the light merge with Heaven and brighten it.

Offer the light of the Earth to all of the beings you see in Heaven. Say, "I love you, Heavenly Beings."

Now, picture and feel a warm, golden ball of light that sits like the sun over everyone in Heaven. Say "Hi" to your Highest Self. (Don't overthink it - we'll get to what that means, later).

Pull the energy of this golden light down to the top of your head.

Let it flow down the back of your head, down your back, down your legs, and down to the bottoms of your feet.

Push the light down to Mother Earth, merging into one light beneath your feet, and give it to her as a blessing of love. Say, "I love you Mother Earth."

Now do repeat this exercise, but make the whole thing flow with one inhalation to pull energy up from the Earth, hold your breath for a moment as you give her light to Heaven with love, and exhale as you pull energy down from Heaven, and hold your breath for a moment as you give Heaven's golden light to Mother Earth with love. If you struggle to hold your breath while saying "I love you Heavenly Beings/Mother Earth," just say, "Love."

**Do five breaths every morning to start your day, and as needed.**

## 1.2.2 – High Five: The Number of Awakening

Before we proceed with the rules of this game, it is important that we spend a moment to talk about the **number five**. You have probably noticed by now that the number five comes up a lot in this course. Why is this so? As we will discover, five is the number most associated with **spiritual** awakening. By understanding **the meaning** of the number five, we can literally unlock the secrets of enlightenment. We will therefore base the **shape** and play of our board game on this wonderful number.

Here are some fun facts about the number five:

### The Sum of Earth & Heaven:

- Philosophically, we can recognize that the number 2 represents duality and Yin, or the World, and 3 represents divinity and Yang, or Heaven. Thus, 5 represents the sum, or oneness, of Earth and Heaven, and of Yin and Yang.
- This is reflected in the fact that the number five is the only prime number that is the sum of two consecutive primes, which are 2 and 3.
- 5 is the 5th number on the Fibonacci Sequence, which are the mathematics that form the [Golden Ratio](#), which is the fractal pattern that forms everything from our ears to our galaxy.
- All Fibonacci numbers are the sum of the previous two numbers on the sequence. After 0 and 1, which are given numbers, the Sequence begins with 1, and then 2, 3, and 5. In other words, 5 being the sum of 2 and 3 actually forms the shape of your face, flower petals, seashells, hurricanes, and your DNA.

### Humanity:

- Five is the number associated with the human form. The human body looks like a star, with five major parts - two arms, two legs, and a head.
- The head takes in the five major senses.
- There are five fingers and toes on every limb.
- There are five vital organs on the inside of the body.

## Time:

- The number 7 represents the context of the journey of the spiritual being (5) that starts with purpose (pre-birth) and ends with eternal meaning (afterlife) =  $5+2$ .
- This is seen in our standard work week of five days, which are bracketed by Sunday and Saturday. Sunday is named for the Sun, which is at the center of our solar system, and Saturday is named for Saturn, which is the farthest planet we can observe with the naked eye. The Sun symbolizes the beginning of the day and of all life, while Saturn was the god of the afterlife. Thus, the 5-day journey with two extra days, representing its purpose and meaning, for a total of 7.
- The number 12 represents the human being (5) within the eternal spiritual journey (7), or  $5+7=12$ .
- There are 12 months to a year, and there are 12 hours to the day, when we understand that a "day" consists of two twelve-hour parts, the worldly (day time) and spiritual (night time).
- $5 \times 12$  is 60, which is the number of minutes in an hour and seconds in a minute.

## Space:

- 60 becomes the basis for the degrees of a circle and of the degrees of the sides of an equilateral triangle, and of the time it takes the earth to travel around the sun, which is  $360+5$ .
- The shape of our universe is said to be a dodecahedron, which is a 12-sided shape composed of pentagons, which themselves have five sides.
- There are five Platonic Solids.
- There are five visible planets in the night sky, and of course, there are five points to a star, which we use to symbolize the stars themselves.

## Harmonics:

- The Perfect 5th (3:2 ratio) creates all harmonics in music.
- The Perfect Fifth consists of 7 semitones.
- The octave of the 5th creates 12 semitones.

## Spirituality:

- The relationships between 5, 7, and 12 are found throughout our understanding of spirituality and religion. We have 7 chakras, 12 major meridians of Qi flow, 5 Chinese elements, 12 apostles, 7 heavens, 12 gods of Olympus, 12 tribes of Israel, 5 stones in King David's pouch, 5 books of the Torah, 5 Pillars and 5 Prayers of Islam, the 5 Pandava brothers of the Mahabarata, 12 signs of the Zodiac, etc., etc., etc.

## My Birthday:

- I was born on the 5th day of January, 1973.
- My mother was born on the 5th of May, which is the 5th month.
- So, naturally, I'm partial to this number.
- (Incidentally, I have quite the affection for dark chocolate. ;)

## 1.2.3 – Your Turn: The Five Phases

So, hopefully it's clear that the number five carries some extraordinary spiritual significance. The main reason we need to use this number is because it so accurately describes the **journey** of the soul.

There are, not surprisingly, five phases to every spiritual journey.

These **Five Phases** are as follows:

### The Five Phases

1. **Beginning**
2. **Exploration**
3. **Discovery**
4. **Transformation**
5. **Return**

All of the **meaningful** parts of our life can be broken down into these Five Phases. Every story of our life, every little adventure. Even a very ordinary day fits within these Five Phases. For example, we get out of bed in the morning (Beginning), we **wander** off to work or school (Exploration), we **learn** something new (Discovery), we take that new wisdom and **fold** it into our consciousness and allow it to change us in sometimes subtle or profound ways (Transformation), and then we **go home** and go to bed (Return).

Our whole life mirrors the Five Phases. When we start our life, we begin as babies, we explore the world, we discover new things, we allow these discoveries to change us, and we eventually return to becoming like babies when we get old.

Almost **every story** ever told - every movie, play, book - goes through these Five Phases. These are the phases of the journey of life.

But what gets you up in the morning? And what's the **point** of any of this? Why do we even begin our journey?

What we observe is that there is a deep, **eternal purpose** that makes life eternally meaningful. And this great purpose, which leads to a great meaning, surrounds our journey like so:

**Purpose** → *Beginning* → *Exploration* → *Discovery* → *Transformation* → *Return* → **Meaning**

What is this great and eternal purpose, and what is this great and eternal meaning? I can't wait to tell you! But that's for **another class**. We will spend a whole class on this question when we get to Unit 4, which is entitled *Enlightenment, Part 3: Why You Are Here*.

For now, recognize that these Five Phases actually represent the **actions** we can take when it is our **turn** to play the Game of Samanya Dharma. What is a turn in this game? A turn is any period of time in which you take away **meaning**.

And now that we have the Goal of our game, and the Five Phases we can take on our turn, we can actually **construct** a Board to play on.

## 1.2.4 – The Five Elements: Constructing the Board

In traditional Chinese philosophy, there exists what are called the *Wu Xing*, or the Five Elements. The Five Elements **hold the secrets** to allowing us to play our game. These elemental forces line up precisely with the Five Phases of the journey, and they do a wonderful job of **explaining** the deeper and quite profound **relationships** between them. We will use the *Wu Xing* to help build a board for our game, so that we may more easily complete our **goal** of experiencing lasting happiness.

The Five Elements of Chinese philosophy are as follows:

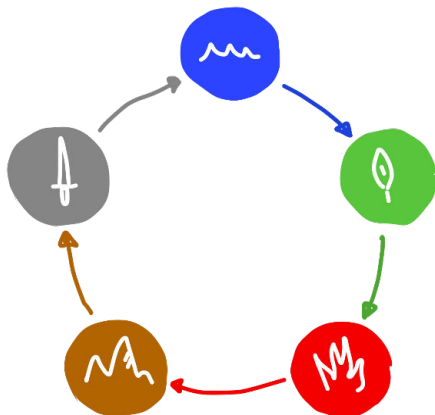
### Five Elements

1. **Water**
2. **Wood**
3. **Fire**
4. **Earth**
5. **Metal**

These Five Elements are said to represent the **flow of life** in the same way as our Five Phases do, in this way:

1. **Water** = Beginning
2. **Wood** = Exploration
3. **Fire** = Discovery
4. **Earth** = Transformation
5. **Metal** = Return

The Chinese saw these five elements as being part of a giant **circle** of life, which looks like so:



- **Generating Cycle:** Notice that in Western alchemical traditions, we only have **four** elements, which are Earth, Water, Fire, and Air. The Chinese never used **Air**, and they instead added **Wood and Metal**, which gives the whole thing a much more **worldly** flare. And by using five elements instead of four, they created **movement**. Each element flows **into** the next. In fact, each of these five elements is said to generate and **create** the next one, in the following way:
  - We **begin** with Water...
  - Water is the **source** of life, which allows plants to grow.
  - Plants become Wood that **ignites** to create Fire.
  - Fire **smolders** into ashes or lava that become the Earth.
  - From the Earth we **mine** for Metal.
  - From Metal...

Wait a second... *How do we get from Metal back to Water?*

- **Metal into Water:** This was actually **my first question** on day one of class as a student of Chinese medicine, but my teachers didn't really know how to explain the answer. And so **four years** later, I decided to make it this question the topic for my **Master's thesis**. And what my research uncovered is that the ancient Chinese philosophers saw the process of Metal becoming Water as a **spiritual metaphor** for the **awakening** of a human being.



Metal doesn't become Water. Metal **reflects** like water and **contains** and **carries** it. In this same way, a perfected human being reflects the Divine and contains its Spirit, carrying love to others.

When metal becomes smooth and **polished** enough, it reflects light in the same way as water. The polished mirror allows us to see who we are; it allows our infinite Spirit to finally **recognize** itself as well. The metaphor of metal becoming like water reminds us of our own need to become **clear** of all confusion.

The human being must also **contain** our infinite Spirit. To do so, we must become **empty** of ego. By emptying ourselves of our pride in the Metal phase, we can become like a Holy Grail. By choosing only Love, we become a **sacred vessel**, so that we may carry the divine Water of Life to others.

Thus, the **Metal phase** represents the beautiful spiritual work of communion meditation, which is union with Love itself. But what happens when **we choose to become a sword** instead?

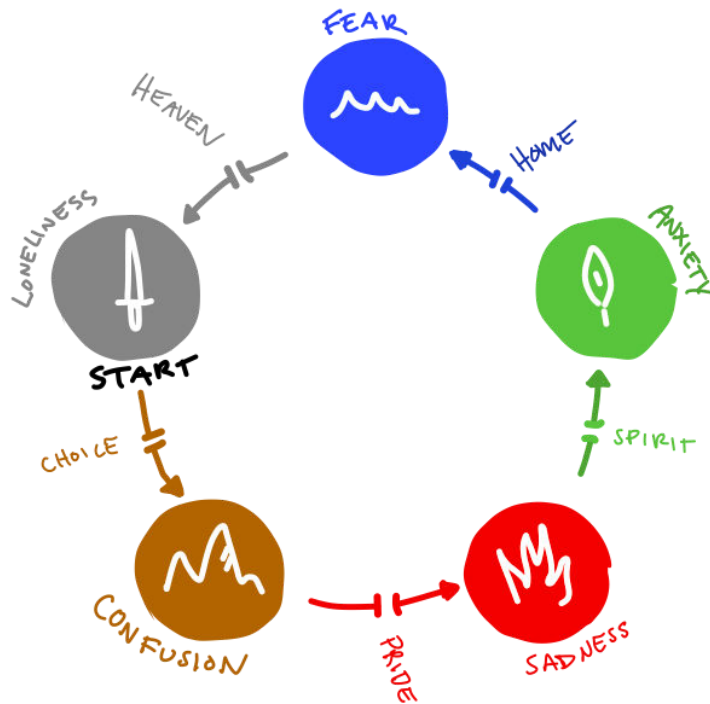
**Metal can also** be a metaphor for the **spiritual failure** of a human being. If instead of choosing truth, we choose swords, bullets, shackles, prison bars, and all of the **ugly aspects of metal**, we do not become a vessel for spiritual return. Instead, we become stuck in the Earth, like a sword in a **stone** that cannot be pulled out, until we choose the path of wisdom.

In the game of **Samanya Dharma**, we recognize that **most of us are stuck** in the Metal phase. Instead of becoming a vessel of light, we are **lost** in the dark night of the soul, and depression looms around the corner. Our backs are against a stone wall, and before us is an impassable ocean. We **do not know** where to go next, and we are **lonely**.

But all of this disappointment and despair is **in our minds**, and our minds belong to us. We can always **choose new ideas** and a different way of thinking. What we need to do is find a good teacher of wisdom. We need to put down our swords, **open** our minds, and start over. We need to retrace our steps, and figure out where we went wrong. We need to **go back** the way we came.

### 1.2.5 – The Board: Our Map of Misery

We cannot go forward as a sword, for a sword **draws blood** instead of holding the Blood of Christ. If you see your face reflected in a sword, you will soon discover **suffering**. Nothing about that experience mirrors who you really are. Instead of continuing forward towards water, we have no choice but to **turn around** and deal with our confusion. We need to figure out how we got here. Thus, our path is to go counterclockwise along the generating cycle of the Five Elements. We must literally **stop time**, and go back to its beginnings. Back to **Eternity** itself.



**The Board:** This is the Board for the Game of Samanya Dharma. I call it the “**Map of Misery.**” It is the map of our own lives. We have turned ourselves into swords, and behind us is a blood-stained **trail** of misery. But a sword cuts things in two; it creates a **dividing line**. This means the sword can also represent our capacity to draw a line in the sand and make a new choice. The sword has a **positive lesson** for us - it teaches us that all bad choices are **temporary**, and that we can always learn from our mistakes, which is **good**. So we will each start with a choice, and that choice is to turn around and face the mess we made, **healing** each misery one by one. But first, we’ll need some **answers**. Where there was confusion, there needs to be clarity. We will need to seek out enlightenment.

### 1.2.6 – How to Play

**The Goal** of Samanya Dharma is to establish **lasting happiness** for everyone. This goal is accomplished by moving your player around the board, resolving each of your Five Miseries through meditation, and **replacing them** with their corresponding happiness, or what are called the Five Gratitudes.

**The Five Miseries** show up and are resolved in the following order:

1. **Confusion**
2. **Sadness**
3. **Anxiety**
4. **Fear**
5. **Loneliness**

They are replaced one by one with **The Five Gratuities**, which are as follows:

1. Confusion → **Clarity**
2. Sadness → **Peace**
3. Anxiety → **Harmony**
4. Fear → **Love**
5. Loneliness → **Bliss**

### The Way You Play This Game is Simple:

- **Begin:** Start at the 5th Phase, or the Metal Phase, which is where you are in life right now. So far, your choices have left behind you a wake of loneliness, confusion, sadness, anxiety, and fear. But you are **not alone** anymore. The truth is, you **never were**. You have a good teacher and a community of fellow students. Make a new choice now to go back and resolve your Confusion by starting meditation training.
- **Explore:** You must then continue moving back the way you came in a **counterclockwise** direction around the Map of Misery, resolving each of your miseries one by one through meditation and **replacing** them with happiness. The Five Forms of Meditation are like the **dice** that move your player around the Board.
- **Discover:** You will begin with **study** - specifically, studying the **Five Keys** of Samanya Dharma. By doing so, you will discover the Truth, and your confusion will eventually be replaced with Clarity.
- **Transform:** The Five Miseries are resolved in the following order: Confusion, Sadness, Anxiety, Fear, and finally Loneliness. They are each replaced with their corresponding form of happiness in the following order: Clarity, Peace, Harmony, Love, and Bliss.
- **Return:** The **Scorecard** for this game is kept by achieving the **Three Attainments**, which are Enlightenment, Mastery, and Awakening. When you are no longer confused, you will have attained **Enlightenment**. When you have resolved your Sadness and Anxiety, you will have achieved **Mastery**. When you have resolved your Fear and Loneliness, you will have experienced **Awakening**. When you have achieved all three, you may call yourself an Enlightened and Awakened Master, or a Spiritual Master, or even just a **Master**, for short. You may then be **given orders** from Spirit Itself to help others as an Avatar of Compassion and Forgiveness. If so, you may title yourself an **Avatar**, for short. But don't get cocky about it. Nobody likes a cocky Avatar. Curiously, some Avatars are given orders **before** they are Enlightened and Awakened Masters. That's a rough ride. **Be nice** to them. And also quite curiously, some Masters **never** receive orders. They're usually fine with that, but not always. Be nice to them, too.

- **The Five Tests:** Along your journey, you will have to pass the Five Tests. Each Test is encountered as you **move** from one Misery to the **next**. If you do not pass the Test, you **cannot** proceed to resolving the next Misery - not because anyone else will stop you, but because you will have stopped **yourself**. These Tests are represented by the arrows between the circles. **The Five Tests** are called (in order of appearance):

1. **Test of Choice** = brown arrow
2. **Test of Pride** = red arrow
3. **Test of Spirit** = green arrow
4. **Test of Home** = blue arrow
5. **Test of Heaven** = grey arrow

Don't worry - we will give you the answers. But just knowing the answers won't matter if you do not choose them.

- **Personal Win:** Hey, you did it - you passed the Test of Heaven! **Congratulations!** Spiritual bliss is yours. You have won the *personal* game of Samanya Dharma. However, your journey is not yet over...
- **Keep Going:** Once you have visited Heaven, you will then continue on in the **same** counterclockwise fashion, returning to the Earth to **help others** resolve their misery until the end of your life. After you die, you'll probably keep on doing the same thing from Heaven, or you'll come back and try your hand again as a **reborn master**, moving through the generating cycle in a **clockwise** fashion, and seeing if you can avoid creating so much misery this time.
- **Relational Win:** Helping to resolve misery and establish lasting happiness for everyone else is how you win the *relational* game of Samanya Dharma. This is a cooperative game; nobody wins until **every** player wins.
- **Lasting Happiness:** Please note that lasting happiness **does not** mean that you will never get upset ever again. Even Jesus wept. But having won the personal game of Samanya Dharma **does** imply that you are **almost always** at peace, and you know how to right yourself very quickly if you **lose** your peace. Again, there is no such thing as a perfect teacher, and there is no such thing as perfect mastery. The master is simply a very good **student**.

## 1.2.7 – The Five Players: Biological & Spiritual Age

The players of Samanya Dharma are, of course, us. But what can we say about us that might help us **understand ourselves** better in the context of this game?

**Biological Age:** When we look at the life of a human being, we can see these Five Ages play out as stages in our development, from infancy to old age:

1. **Infancy** = Water = Beginning
2. **Childhood** = Wood = Exploration
3. **Young** = Fire = Discovery
4. **Maturity** = Earth = Transformation
5. **Old Age** = Metal = Return

When we talk to another human being, we usually take into account the **biological age** of that person. It would be a bit weird not to, and very wise to do so. We don't ask an infant to fill out a tax form, we don't typically ask a grownup if they looked both ways when crossing the street, and we don't typically give an old person a football uniform and then dive tackle them on the field. So when we deal with each other, it's **fair and polite** to observe a person's biological developmental station in life and respond accordingly.

However, it is important to note that these Five Ages of development are not just descriptive of the stages of a human being's life, but also of the stages of development that a **soul** goes through as it progresses from one life to the next.

**Spiritual Age:** It is the case that some of our souls are still in their infancy, having reincarnated perhaps only a few times, while others are essentially like children, having only reincarnated a dozen times or more. Others are like teenagers or young adults, with maybe only two dozen lives under their belts, and others are like mature adults, with a couple dozen more. And then there are souls who are quite old, some having reincarnated a hundred times or more. What we therefore come to understand is that when we are relating to **ourselves** and to **each other**, we need to not only recognize our biological age of our bodies, but it is also critical that we understand the **developmental** age of our **souls**.

It is absolutely **critical** that we allow each soul the wiggle room of **non-judgement** that it needs to grow. Though it may **seem** like you are talking to an adult human being, you may actually be talking to someone who is **spiritually** like a baby. Why would you then **expect** them to have accumulated very much in the way of wisdom? Were you not once a baby yourself?

It is really not so difficult to see how old a soul is - the proof is really in their **behavior**. Let's take a look at common characteristics of the various types of souls, according to their development:

### Infant Souls: The Narcissists

An infant soul will seem vacant, shy, unclear on how to be in the world, and extraordinarily **narcissistic**. They have almost **no ability** to see things from another person's point of view. They typically struggle to communicate and understand **normal social cues**. They can also seem extremely **charismatic** and likeable, but they will consume you in their flame if you get too close. The infant soul can do **unspeakable** things - horrible, horrible things - and then just as quickly be extremely gracious. They have almost no sense for **how to govern themselves**. When they finally **do understand** how to fit into normal human culture, they become almost **pathetic** in their willingness to **obey** orders.

### Child Souls: The Conformists

A child soul, or "childlike" soul, (it is weird that we do not have a good word for a "child-stage" of human development in the English language - it's as if we don't count them as **actual people** at that age), will seem **vibrant**, engaged in the world, and is typically eager to follow the norms of social patterns. They typically have very **unsophisticated** morals - everything is black and white. They sometimes **don't share** well, and they usually flock together. They are highly **suspicious** of people outside of their family or culture, and they tend to **blame** everyone else for their problems. They mostly stay out of trouble, but they also **don't participate** much in advancing human **culture**, but they do accurately reflect the health of the society they grow up in. As they progress, they tend to get suckered into cults and the ugliest aspects of politics, business, and religion. Most common **criminals** are wayward Child souls. As with all children, their bad behavior is just a cry for attention. When we create a society where love is **at best** a neglected idea, **at worst** a lie proven false by trauma and **abuse**, how can we be surprised when children reflect that neglect and abuse back at us?

### Young Souls: The Activists

Young souls, on the other hand, are incredibly **energetic** and very much **engaged** in the world of human culture. They are past childhood, but not yet mature. They take to politics, music, and the arts with wild enthusiasm, and they are often highly **idealistic**. They can also be over-the-top **materialistic**; usually while condemning materialism. They get caught up in sordid romances, and their relationships are often short-lived. Sometimes they work really hard, and sometimes they completely bottom out. They are prone to distraction and **self-destruction**. They struggle with **big ideas**, and they try really hard to understand what it means to be human. They are very suspicious of those in power, but they love to grab the reins. In short, they act just like teenagers and young adults.

### Mature Souls: The Strugglers

Mature souls are often in the midst of deep soul work, as they try to burn off Karma and figure out where they went wrong. They have finally understood something about **compassion**, and

they realize they've made an awful lot of awful **mistakes** on their way to this understanding. In their eagerness to correct their path and resolve their karmic entanglements, they often take on **brutally difficult** lives, and their relationships are often filled with **tragedy**. They often create really extraordinary **works** of human enterprise, even as they struggle with their personal lives, and much of **history's progress** is carved out by this group. Their ability to see from another's point of view is often **quite sophisticated**, but they see everyone else's worthiness of love except their own. They struggle most of all with the **imperfection** of life - their own, and everyone else's. They care deeply, and they love the world, but they eventually run out of the energy necessary to do anything more for it. They can spend many lives in a state of **deep** introversion, as they seek a basis for forgiveness. They can seem like the wisest and most profound thinkers - people of real weight - but their spiritual understanding **breaks down** around the universality of their ideas upon deeper examination. They often live lives of deep self-contradiction, **hypocrisy**, and scandal. Though they present very well, they cannot see their way out of the woods because of their deep sense of **guilt**. Their belief in the importance of the world and our actions in it **drowns** them like a captain on their own sinking ship.

### Old Souls: The Forgivers

Old souls can get caught up in the story just like everyone else, and sometimes even more so for a short time. They often have the most forward **intuition** as to how to resolve humanities problems, but they will make huge mistakes in implementation, as they lose their **concern** for the world. Old souls truly **believe in themselves**, and they will often make one last hurrah at trying to save the world before finally realizing that the world doesn't need to be saved. However, now and then they get it right, and they tend to leave **the most lasting** positive impacts on the progress of human society. But eventually, the old soul simply loses interest in the affairs of the world. As they get further along, they like to settle into quiet, rather **peaceful lives** and tend to their gardens, meditation, and memoirs. Their **spiritual** understanding is highly evolved. They like to teach, but they often find there isn't anyone out there who has much interest in what they have to say. The old soul knows how to get along with others, and they **laugh** from a place of **enlightenment** and forgiveness far, far more than any of the rest.

### 1.2.8 – The Five Players: Personas

In addition to a soul's developmental age, it is important to note that all souls like to wrap themselves up in a particular "**Persona**," or personality profile. Other traditions refer to these personas as "**archetypes**," such as those developed by Carl Jung, or as "**overleafs**," as is found in the [Michael Teachings](#). Within the Samanya Dharma teaching, there are understood to be five of these Personas, each with two subtypes - a **yin** form, and a **yang** form - for a total of **ten**. The soul will **wear the same persona** as if it were a mask for the duration of its development - from infancy to old age. The soul will sometimes flip from one yin or yang subtype over the course of their spiritual development, sometimes even changing subtypes during a single lifetime, but they rarely change their overall Persona. They are **curious** to see the whole process through. The soul finds these personas **fun**, challenging, and useful as a means for **exploring** different talents, perspectives, and communities. The Five Personas and their subtypes are as follows:

### 1. Framers = Water Type

Yang = Monarchs

Yin = Monks

### 2. Fighters = Wood Type

Yang = Warriors

Yin = Wanderers

### 3. Fools = Fire Type

Yang = Satirists

Yin = Scholars

### 4. Farmers = Earth Type

Yang = Caretakers

Yin = Crafters

### 5. Fatalists = Metal Type

Yang = Prophets

Yin = Protectors

Let's take a look at them one by one.

## Framers: The Big Picture People

- **Focus:** Big Picture
- **Desire:** Safety
- **Lesson:** Our infinite Self cannot be harmed.

Framers are the sort of people who want absolutely **nothing to do with details**, except as it relates to the creation and management of large organizations, structures, and systems. They love to see the big picture behind all of **life's great puzzles**, and they endlessly persevere at trying to figure out how to make big things work. Framers struggle to mingle and play with others, so obsessed are they with **zooming out** and taking it all in.

**As Monarchs**, they often function well in **leadership** roles, and they prefer to see the world from that perspective. However, due to their lack of attention to the details of human life, they often fare poorly at **gaining the trust** of others, or getting others to see things as **broadly** as they do. When they do succeed at figuring out how to manage the day to day of being human and relating to other humans while remaining focused on the big picture, they can be wildly successful leaders. Their focus in life is always around **safety**, especially keeping others safe. They obsess on perfecting government, companies, religions, or other large human enterprises, always with an eye for lasting **stability**. Their best strategy for managing the mundane details of



their day to day needs is to live in almost comically **simplistic** and eccentric ways. Maybe they always wear the same outfit, or they refuse to eat anything but three foods, or they never marry. The Emperor struggles with **delusions** of grandeur, and may be tempted to lie and manipulate the facts in order to maintain the illusion of their impressiveness. And yet despite their effort to puff themselves up as the source of safety for others, **disaster** always comes, and they are left picking up the pieces. They can experience a deep existential crisis around their failure, until they **eventually** realize that the soul is immortal, and no one is **ever** truly harmed. The enlightenment Emperor finally embraces the simple beauty of ordinary life, including its impermanence. They learn that separation and death are necessary illusions as we learn our lessons of love. Accepting this, they offer themselves as a **model** of inner peace, grace, and moderation, and they allow others to learn how to govern themselves by observing the Emperor's good example.

**As Monks**, they take their interest in safety and move it **inward**. When Framers inevitably fail to implement their big structural changes as Monarchs to keep everyone safe, or even if they do for a time succeed, they often **retreat** from the world and become highly introverted. The Framer in their Ascetic role will go to remarkable lengths to map out the internal world of the human experience. They have little interest in the outer world, and can become quite **antisocial**. They can even grow to hate the world itself, growing a deep resent for its refusal to keep the beauty of life from turning into the ugliness of death at a moment's notice. They therefore seek wisdom within themselves out of a passionate concern for the **salvation** of humanity. They are often the **deepest** of spiritual seekers, philosophers, or psychologists, although they sometimes fail to make the wisdom they acquire **relatable** to the day-to-day experience of others. Eventually, the enlightened Ascetic learns to moderate their efforts and **open up** to others, creating families and ordinary relationships, so that they can teach everyone to achieve the profound wisdom that they have discovered on their inner journey.

### Fighters: The Equalizers

- **Focus:** Winning
- **Desire:** Equality
- **Lesson:** We are all one, and therefore equal.

Fighters are obsessed with figuring out how to **conquer** the world, while simultaneously making sure to keep the world in **order**. They are definitely up for a challenge, and they rarely shy away from a chance to try something new. But more than anything, they see themselves as champions of **equality**.

**As Warriors**, a Fighter can make the **mistake** of seeing their fight for justice as being solely focused on **their own** chance to succeed against a **world** that feels like it's always trying to take them out. They will fight for their own needs out of greed or envy, and they hate it when others take their stuff, or worse, damage their **reputations**. Warriors are **competitive** to a fault, and they cannot shy away from a game of chance. They are not at all shy to engage in physical shows of

strength, but they are also just as excited to win at the game of finance, academics, sales, or other pursuits - just as long as they're **winning**. When they finally find their groove, they realize that their main work is to help maintain fairness in the world - not just for themselves, but for others, too. The enlightened Warrior sees their own struggle in the eyes of **everyone else**, and they finally recognize that it is their job to fight peacefully for the downtrodden or oppressed, and that everyone is **equal** under the laws of humanity and, most especially, of Spirit. They make excellent leaders, judges, and lawyers, and of course, they make the best soldiers, firefighters, and police officers.

**As Wanderers**, they give up their drive for **personal** glory and instead seek out an understanding of the **natural** order in the world. When they finally realize that human justice doesn't stay fixed when they just fixed it, they start to feel a deep call to **travel** and explore. The Wanderer always wonders if there are other ways to live that are better, kinder, or more just. They are utterly fascinated with the **outdoors**, delighting in the balance and cooperative elements of the animals, plants, and stones. They love to **collect**, catalog, and detail their adventures, hoping that others will start to see biology in a more balanced way. The young adventurer seeks the gold and **material** bounty of new places, having little regard for the indigenous people of those new places who claim that wealth as their own; however, as they grow in spiritual development, they instead seek the bounty of **wisdom** that may be kept by unknown people from far off lands. They also take a fascination with fantasy, and they love to **write and tell tales** of a utopian future or a magical past. The Wanderer can also find themselves at the forefront of uncovering false assumptions about the world. They like to shed light on those parts of society or the world that have been neglected or abused. They **scout** ahead of everyone else's assumptions, reporting on the situation on the ground, and they stand up for what is **true** when others would paint a false picture of what's really happening. They make the best public defenders, journalists, photographers, writers, and of course, they make the best explorers. The enlightened Wanderer eventually laughs at the **eternal** nature of the journey, and they fight to defend the spiritual paths of others, even when that path includes needless mistakes. And yet, they often cannot resist **anonymously** interfering to help others avoid needless suffering.

### **Fools: The Truth Tellers**

- **Focus:** Truth
- **Desire:** Goodness
- **Lesson:** The world and the persona are illusions, but our goodness is always true.

Fools are interested in the exploration, explanation, and **expression** of the truth. They want to know what life is all about, what it means to be human, and why things are the way they are. The only **reason** we call them "fools" is because they end up discovering that the truth they seek to tell cannot ever be told, but only felt. But do not mock Fools for their efforts - they **always** get the last laugh. Though the truth cannot be spoken, it can be known through contemplation and direct experience, and the Scholar and Satirist will blaze a trail towards both paths, respectively.

**As Satirists**, the Fool wants to **perform** the truth, exaggerating the human tale through entertainment so that everyone can see themselves a little more clearly. As the yang expression of the Fire Types, they are stuck in very **high-energy** mode, and they take to the work of mocking humanity with a **passion** that sometimes consumes their own sense of normalcy. They are intensely alive, and they use their bodies and voices to light a passion within others. As **rockstars**, they tell the truth of our emotional and sexual repression. As **actors**, they mirror life on the screen or stage. They attempt to make meaning of life by showing us not just our miseries, but also our hopes. They immortalize the **heroics** of others. As comedians, they mock the stiffness, stupidity, and hypocrisy of our leaders. Fools often make excellent teachers, especially the Satirists - they treat the classroom like a **theater**, as they do everything in life, and their students get to laugh as they learn. When Satirists fail to find the **good** in life, which is what they seek above all else, they often lose themselves in the pathos and **tragedy** of it all and seek pleasures as a replacement for their missing joy. They are highly prone to self-destruction or distraction via materialism. As the court jesters, the enlightened Satirists finally learn to find the **humor** and meaning in the mad pageant that is life, and they **laugh** harder than anyone when they discover that the eternal bliss of our oneness is very good, indeed. They learn that the true meaning of life is a **comedy**, and never a tragedy.

**As Scholars**, the Fool attempts to tell the truth through **study**, research, and abstract expression. As the yin expression of the Fire Types, they represent the **soft glow** of smoldering ashes. Being stuck in permanent **low-energy** mode, they are nevertheless just as obsessed with the truth as the Satirists. Their lack of heat keeps them locked in the **intellectual** orientation, and they often struggle to understand normal human emotions and healthy sexual expression. Though **absent emotionally**, their minds are nevertheless ablaze with the mathematical perfection of the world, and they dissect and abstract every aspect of life as if it was a **science**, including music, psychology, law, history, and medicine. For them, the good is found in making sure that everything **always adds up**. The scholars are the **fact-checkers**, and they make sure that everyone else is telling the truth. Eventually, the enlightened Scholar learns to laugh and delight in the fact that the world is an **illusion**, and our objective reality is entirely whatever we make it to be.

### **Farmers: The Perfectionists**

- **Focus:** Creating
- **Desire:** Forgiveness
- **Lesson:** Suffering and mistakes allow us to know the perfection of love.

Farmers are those who live **close to the Earth**, and they do their best to make it a better place. They have a deep understanding and appreciation of **daily living**, with a strong desire to make the world more beautiful and **comfortable** for themselves and for others. They enjoy creating a welcoming and charming shared space, they are often generous to a fault with their time and talents. They will go to no ends to make sure that the **details** of good living are attended to, and

they have the keenest interest in family life, valuing inclusion above all else. However, it can take them a while to get there, especially with regards to **forgiving** themselves. In the meantime, their guilt and **perfectionism** can create a mob mentality around labeling others as **outsiders**. When they have finally matured into their spiritual growth, they are the most forgiving of sorts.

**As Caretakers**, the Farmer leans into helping others to feel healed, happy, nourished, and welcomed. They are profoundly awakened to **compassion** for others, but sometimes fail to feel very good about **themselves**. Their focus on details makes them see too much imperfection -both outside themselves and within. They know a lot about being nice to others, but despite their extraordinary efforts at **kindness**, they are by far and away the most likely to suffer from a guilty conscience. As they constantly fail to make the world perfect, they may become quite **controlling**. They may even try to keep “undesirable” people out of their lives, and they can be prone to labeling others as “different” or “unequal.” They struggle more than any with a **fear** that the **perfect bubble** they have tried to create for themselves and their loved ones will be ruined by life’s ever encroaching dooms. Caretakers often **pretend** to be **unintelligent** in order to avoid having to look too deeply at their worst fears and controlling behavior. Eventually, the enlightened Caretaker recognizes that nothing they care for will last. Forgiving the world and themselves, they **let go** of control, allowing the beautiful act of caring for others to be perfect all by itself.

**As Crafters**, the Farmer focuses their detail-orientation and perfectionism on **beautification** of the world and the perfection of material **things**. They are the sculptors, architects, artists, construction workers, models, and engineers of the world. They are perpetually fascinated with the question of how to improve on the **practical and artistic** experience of day to day living. They obsessively tinker and fuss on whatever grabs their focus, spending hours fixing, repairing, and fine-tuning. They get lost in their work, to the point that they may totally **neglect** their own outer appearance, relationships, or physical health. As they grow in spiritual age, they do an about-face and become hyper-focused on physical health and relationships as an expression of beauty, and they will now obsess on making an **image** of the perfect home and perfect family. Their social media profile will be awash with images of their amazing resume and lifestyle. Though the Crafters lack the compassionate orientation of their Caretaker counterparts, they are similarly **unforgiving** of their own mistakes. They cannot let go of even a tiny error in their efforts, and they will go to bizarre lengths to cover them up. No matter what they focus on as their object of perfection, their extraordinary ability to **zoom in** leaves something else neglected and left out, and the people they love often feel like props. Eventually, the spiritual development of the Crafter leaves them recognizing the **impossibility** of material perfection, and they leave the world satisfied with **allowing** beauty to be a never-ending process of creation, destruction, and re-creation. The enlightened Crafter takes delight in making sandcastles by the seashore, and they take equal delight in watching the ocean annihilate their work.

### **Fatalists: The Purpose Seekers**

- **Focus:** Purpose

- **Desire:** Self-Importance
- **Lesson:** Every single being must return to Heaven if the Divine is to know Itself.

Fatalists are those of us who yearn to make life **purposeful**, even if they have no idea of life's actual meaning. They are obsessed with purpose, and they care deeply about their own **self-importance** in the context of the Universe's greater purpose. Above all else, they want to know why we are here and **what will happen** to us when we die. They want to believe so much in their own importance that they are prone to lessening the importance of others as a means of creating contrast. However, Fatalists eventually do figure out that all beings are of equal value, and that the importance of all beings is **maximal**. When they do, they make helping others to know this truth their new purpose.

In their effort to find meaning, Fatalists look to the wisdom of the past, and they desperately seek to **preserve** its ways. They see the past as being sacred, especially the work of other Fatalists, and they see the future as being wrought with doom. They believe that their intense study of **wisdom traditions** and their fascination with purpose can endow them with some ability to know what's coming, and they work hard to **convince** others of this gift of foresight. They frequently **condemn** those who oppose their dire predictions, or make light of the sacred past, calling on others to do the same, either loudly or through the most subtle of whisper campaigns. Their greatest fear is of being **dismissed** as unimportant, and their greatest joy is in helping others to know that they are loved. In doing so, they become one with Love itself.

**As Prophets**, the Fatalist focuses on the **future** as it relates to our purpose. They are perpetually concerned with our collective failure to fulfill our universal reason for being. Though they have no idea **why** we were created, and rarely think to ask, they are nevertheless sure we are headed for doom. They assume that **every** specific instance of doom that occurs in the world, whether it be big or small, is a result of our being **punished** by the Divine, and they seek to avoid this punishment at all costs. The young Prophet sees themselves as being touched with an **otherworldly** nature, and they often seek out and experience visions, dreams, and spiritual experiences to confirm their **special** spiritual connection. This desire for spiritual self-importance can become dangerous for themselves and others. They may use their spiritual specialness to drum up **condemnation** against whatever or whomever they perceive to be responsible for our troubles, and they are quickest to justify violence. They are especially keen on protecting the lives of "their" people, whom they see as **good**, against the mistakes and of "others," whom they see as **evil**. They think our behavior determines the fate of the world, and are obsessed with **righteousness**. They eventually become filled with grief at their inability to protect those they love from doom, and their compassion for what they see as a **meaningless** world can lead them to profound states of **depression**. Prophets are called to religion, teaching, politics, and occasionally to finance. Eventually, they figure out that it is our **beliefs** that determine our reality, and not our behavior. They settle in on the infinite nature of the Good, and realize that evil **cannot** exist. When they finally figure out how to focus their concern for purpose on more loving messages, they can help others to **choose love** as well. The enlightened Predictor finally figures out that we were created by Love, and that Love does not punish.

Instead, Love simply seeks to know itself. They become **humble visionaries**, helping us to see and create a positive future of integration and oneness for humanity, while recognizing that the perfect future they wished to see in the world can always be seen within.

**As Protectors**, the Fatalists will take a **softer** approach to saving the world. Protectors see themselves as the anointed keepers of wisdom traditions, sacred halls, and literature. They become passionate about **history**, and they collect relics from the past in order to guard and preserve their stories. They love venerable institutions, and they try to commune with the **spirits** of old that can no longer speak for themselves. They are the **shamans**, priests, and worshippers who relish in sacrament and ceremony, giving life and importance to the quiet things in the world. Family **rituals** in their home are carefully preserved. They make for excellent librarians, healers, lecturers, and historians. They can become fanatical sports fans, caring almost as much for a treasured baseball card or jersey as they do for their own children. They always harken back to better times, and their **nostalgia** for the past can become a hindrance for anything being seen as good in the present. They may see their role as Protector in a very physical way, and they are often surprisingly eager to throw their bodies onto the pyre as **martyrs** for their cause. Their yin nature often makes them struggle to connect with other adults, but they always delight in gentle **animals** and well-behaved children, and anyone else they perceive to be cute, **vulnerable**, and in need of **saving**. As they grow in spiritual age, the Protector takes on a special role of overseeing the support and protection of even larger communities of **downtrodden** and forgotten voices, regardless of how relatable they may be. They become civil rights leaders, the heads of NGOs, social workers, museum curators, school principals, or environmentalists. They work to make sure that **all** are loved and are able to feel their importance. The enlightened Protector eventually learns that all beings are vital to the meaning of life, and that the lessons of history are **never lost** - nothing that we love ever is.

### 1.2.9 – Which One Are You?

Of course, the **question** on the minds of most people as they are reading through these descriptions of Soul Ages and Personas is, *which one of those am I?* It's almost guaranteed that you think you could be **more than one** of these things. And you'd be **right**. The truth is, you are. We all are. Trying to shoehorn something as vast as your soul into these small categories will always seem unnecessarily **limiting**. And yet, the soul itself does this - it seeks out limitations, because only by doing so can it learn something about what it means to be a self. But the curious thing about the soul is that it contains an awareness of all of us, **all at once**. Therefore, if you relate to different aspects of each of the Soul Ages or Personas, that's a good sign that your soul has been **around the block** a whole lot of times as a human being.

And that's exactly what happens - the soul will go through what are called "**cycles**," perhaps spending around 100 lives developing an understanding of one particular aspect of its being by moving through each of the Soul Ages as one of the Personas. Some souls have even cycled through **all of the personas** already, and some may have even cycled through all of them several times, though this level of mastery is a bit rare in the world, at present.

The **interesting** question may not be which of the Soul Ages and Personas do you relate to - that could indeed be all of them - but instead, which one **calls out** to you the most *at this time*. As for the soul, time is a thing it **plays within**, in the same way that you sometimes confine yourself to playing on a tennis court. You do this as a way to **challenge yourself** and grow, and have fun. Same thing with the soul and time. But just as you can step out of the confines of the tennis court anytime you want, your soul can do the same, and it often does **step out** of the court to notice its own **trajectory** through time, which allows it to see all of time, all at once. In doing so, it can see all of its Soul Ages and Personas all at once, and it can **map a course** that it likes through the lifetimes ahead.

### 1.2.10 – Awareness of Choice

But you may be saying to yourself, *why on Earth would I choose my present trajectory? I don't like the path I'm currently on. How can I change it?* And yet, if you didn't choose this path, **who did?** Love itself **never** forces you to do anything, because that wouldn't be a very loving thing to do. You always choose your **own** path. And if you wanted to change that path, **who but you** could do so? It is **always** your choice to experience something in this world. The soul wants to learn from your life in this world, and it may choose a **difficult** path if it feels like that's what is **needed** to really get the lesson. And yet, when we are in emotional pain, we often struggle to realize that we are very much in the driver's seat. It's just like the empathic orientation to think that you are not in control, but the **truth** is, you always are. To help you get a grip on the wheel and **steady** yourself on the road, I am going to suggest a **mindfulness** meditation for you to practice over the next two weeks until our next class.

## Closing Exercise:

### Mindfulness Meditation: Awareness of Choice

Begin this meditation in the morning, after having reset yourself with at least 5 breaths of the Heaven & Earth Meditation.

Then, as you go about your day, say the following words in your head:

***"I am aware of my freedom to choose."***

This is your first mantra for this class.

As you're saying this mantra, notice how these words make you feel.

Occasionally, stop and notice something that you are looking at, or listening to, or thinking about, and modify your words so that you acknowledge that you are freely choosing to experience those sensations, thoughts, or feelings.

For example, if you see a lamp, say: *"I am aware of my choice to see this lamp."* Or if you are feeling sad, say: *"I am aware of my choice to feel sad."* Or if you are thinking about work, say *"I am aware of my choice to think about work."*

Continue pointing out to yourself what you are specifically choosing with your senses, feelings, and thoughts for five minutes, and then go back to the original mantra.

While doing this affirmation, notice the words as much as you can, but it's fine if they are playing in the back of your mind, too.

**Say this mantra all day long, no matter what you're doing.**

## 1.2.10 – Your Next Move: Enlightenment

And that's it for today! **Congratulations!** You made it to the end of Unit 1. :)

In the next unit, that's where we really sink our teeth into "meditation," which is to say, concentration practice. I will walk you through the **advanced form**, and I will get you started with a deeper understanding of what we will really be accomplishing through your meditation. Our next class also gets you started on the path to **Enlightenment**, which is to say, an end to your confusion. We will be tackling and answering the Big Questions of Life, beginning with *What Is Real* and *Who You Are*.



Between now and then, you will have a **choice** to make, and that choice is simple enough - *do you want to play?* This question should create no fear for you - there's absolutely **no harm** that can come to you either way. Please note that choosing to play doesn't mean accepting any of this as true. I will always encourage you to **stay skeptical**. The only time you should abandon skepticism is when your own happiness makes it impossible to stay that way. This is really just a question about **openness**.

If you do want to play, the worst thing that could happen is that you may **learn** about something that doesn't help you. Could be worse. And if you don't want to play, all that will happen is that you will go play at **something else** that appeals to you more right now. And that's **100% fine** - nothing at all will come of that choice other than perhaps an acknowledgement by me of the importance of you **doing just that**.

I will always **honor** and respect your choices, whether they align with my own beliefs **or not**, and no love will be lost whatsoever between us if they don't. That is my promise to you.

Also, before you make your choice, recognize that there is a **whole lot more** that I wish to share with you. We have **barely** scratched the surface! Our future classes will be a lot more focused. There were a lot of ground rules to cover in this session, but because we got them all out of the way, there will be much more **room to play**, discuss, and discover as we go forward.

And I also promise that everything I teach you, I have personally experienced. And so can you!

So... until next time, take **good** care of yourself, enjoy your Heaven & Earth and Awareness of Choice meditations, and don't be shy if you have any questions. **I'm available** by email at [muki@healinghouse.com](mailto:muki@healinghouse.com), (please allow 48 hours for me to respond), and I will be joining you all on our Samanya Dharma Facebook Group as often as I can.

Namaste.

[ ----- End of Unit 1 - Introduction: Rules of Play ----- ]