

When We Speak of Flowers ...

by Danièle Laberge

Swami Vishnu-devananda defined mantras as 'cosmic energy encapsulated in a sound form.' He also planted thousands of flowers every year in our ashrams saying that flowers, like mantras, hold a divine energy in their structure. The geometric patterns of flowers create 'yantra' or energetic forms that heal and calm the mind by their very presence. Danièle Laberge is an internationally-renowned bio-dynamic gardener herbalist who has had spectacular results in growing hundreds of varieties of flowers from all climes in the rugged Quebec environment. Her connection with nature is entirely spiritual and holistic and offers a fresh approach to 'unity in diversity.'

Before writing about flowers, let me quote Lanza del Vasto: *Oh God, please, may I never be one of those who look at flowers with competence...*

Of the spiritual vastness of flowers, we know so little. For more than thirty years now, I have been growing countless species of flowering medicinal plants (aren't they all!). And I must admit that with each growing season, I stand eternally new before the experience, as the more subtle aspects and resonances of flowers reveal to me, little by little, the cosmic nuances and hues of divine creativity. With respect and gratitude in my gardens I dwell. My garden is my temple.

*Earth is crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes*
—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

From the smallest inconspicuous flowers, hiding amongst the grasses on my lawn, to the flamboyant showy ones adorning herb beds and mixed borders, all are most exquisite gifts reflecting the vibrant spiritual realms of the divine. There are intimate spiritual forces contained in flowers. They are love in search of a word.



If we could see the miracle of a single flower clearly, our whole life would change, wrote the Buddha about 2,500 years ago. This insight has been echoed over the centuries by so many religions, philosophies and individuals, but have we, in our entire lifetime, spent an hour or two tuning into a single flower? If so, perhaps we have begun to understand the mantras and asanas of flowers.

So the plant grows, drinks the sunlight and through a succession of contractions and expansions, rises towards the heavens. Then at one point, the heavens touch the plant more intimately than ever. From this cosmic embrace the flower appears in a perfect moment of bliss. The plant meets its archetype's soul as well as the soul regions of the planet and dilates in an explosion of sheer joy, of beauty and of grace. The flower is a spiritual offering to the gods. It offers a glance into the invisible, more beautiful than words can ever describe.

The nectar is but a slight pressure of the soul sphere on the specialized glands of the flower. The flower then receives a cosmic warmth that allows it to emit etheric oils, aromatic compounds, colorful pigments, waxes and other substances saturated with warmth. A small miracle happens. By nature, the plant has no inner warmth. It adopts the temperature of its environment. Yet, within the flower, because the flower also belongs to the heavens, we find a very slight yet measurable production of inner warmth - small but tangible proof that the heavens came down. Virtues have descended. Love is born.

Flowers have their origin in the ultimate sacrifice of the evolved threefold nature of the plant, the green rooted being. As the plant rises towards the heavens, refining and lightening as it enters the realms of air and warmth, a longing arises within, a calling to merge with the essence of aspiration and to sculpt, out of its greenness, a most intricate and delicate offering. The flower, emerging from this movement of generosity, becomes incense on the altar of a simple earthly stem. It reflects divine virtues and emanates a selflessness that is truly inspiring.

As it opens up to bliss and completion - just before losing itself into infinity - the flower remembers us and our deep need to be reminded daily of the beauty of the Creator. And so, after having inspired the heavens, it holds its

breath a second and in doing so, just before merging, it reminisces in a supreme effort to serve. It reverses the overpowering appeal of the spirit and produces the ultimate recollection of all, its seeds, so more flowers may adorn our earthly path. It then renders its body to the Earth Mother and soars like a spiritual butterfly. For what is a flower but a butterfly still attached to the Earth - Rudolf Steiner.

*The rose that with your earthly eyes you see
Has flowered in God for all eternity*

—ANGELUS SILESIVS

Flowers express joy at the birth of a child and adorn ceremonies in every religion. They serve as tokens of love, gifts, lifting spirits, paying respect to the departed, inspiring artists and poets, brightening houses and gardens. Flowers touch our lives in a way that brings healing of infinite and indefinable measure. They connect us with beauty and allow us to become part of this infinitude. We live in a holographic universe where the smallest part contains all of the elements of the whole; our tiniest action can affect the universe in ways we are only just beginning to imagine. One day, we will know we have all we need to be whole and sound. We are just awakening to the gifts within and to our own flower-likeness. Our brain even looks like a flower, a cauliflower. We even talk about brain stem...

May we be inspired to look at flowers in an entirely different way,

using the gifts of the flowers to fine-tune ourselves to be all that we are, for the sake of all of us. Flowers are crowns of glory and consciousness healers. The very presence of flowers is healing. They do not have to be taken in the form of tea, although they love to serve in that way. They do not even need to be taken in the lovely subtle form of a flower essence, these infusions of energy patterns in water, although this provides a wonderful service to humanity. Flower essences are tinctures of liquid consciousness that heal by inspiration rather than by causal force. The flower essence healing system utilizes the bond between flowers and humans to help us evolve into higher consciousness. Flowers can heal by pure association with the spiritual qualities they embody. Flowers can help us overcome the conflict between the mind and the soul.

Love alone heals. The flower encourages and stimulates the presence of love within us. Flowers are closely associated with divine virtues. They confirm our innate virtues and help us acquire others. Their colors and scents, forms and essences mirror specific gifts and qualities of the divine. When I meditate on virtues, it helps me to perceive them as beings of light. Patience or discernment then become very real to me as I invite them to teach me and to enter my path of service. If I walk in my garden and meet a little plant that seems to be suffering, I call to the rescue the divine virtue of tenacity and formally introduce each to the other. I know they can merge. The next day, my little plant usually stands much stronger and starts to heal in response to the heavenly meeting.

We have all been wounded by living in our money-centered, stimulus-overloaded world. For some of us, it has caused a lot of “bleeding” and for others, stagnation; we have become hardened. Love of flowers can help energies to circulate once again.



When we speak of Flowers...

Flower, oh flower,
You are life in all its beauty.
Come speak to life and beauty in me.
Flower, oh flower,
Come find your resemblance in my soul,
And weave a channel of light,
Of good scents and of harmony.
Flower, oh flower,
Take away the tears, the fears,
Bring the world's beauty.
Let it enter each cell,
Everywhere in my body,
Everywhere in my life.
Burst into rays,
Penetrating each pore of my skin
And reach the images.
Touch the ideas and the sorrows,
The hardships and the misfortunes
That are hidden there.
Free them so that there be room for the
good life.
Flower, oh flower,
Life on earth is a flower,
But a flower...

Spirit shows itself in nature. We can learn to tune our receiving mechanism anew. We can learn to *care for and to tend the garden* —GENESIS. There is a belief in miracles at the true heart of gardening. We live on an exotic, ancient planet, and we need to begin healing her. We share our home with millions of species which are heading toward extinction because of a lack of human wisdom. The renewal of the world starts within each one of us. As we heal so does the earth. To heal means more than removing symptoms. It means to make whole, to awaken to our true nature. We think we are the center of the universe. We need to feel the universe as our being.

Healing is focusing. Times of chaos and confusion, doubt or hesitation, are the moments to step forward and focus. Focusing on what is blooming in the world is a good place to start. Certain virtues can help us to approach flowers with the proper attitude and become receptive to their spiritual blessings. We must welcome the virtue of proper observation. It will help us meet the flowers with neither judgment nor projection, in a non-grasping but watchful way. We need to express our gratitude and recognition as the flowers carry consciousness of spiritual oneness. I recognize you from within since we are one and I give thanks for meeting you in my heart. A proper sense of communication is needed as it carries with it the ability to tune to different frequencies. It is the entranceway to ultimate communion. Clarity will allow us to look afresh, as if seeing for the first time...and so it is. We start to distinguish what truly is, discarding our learned limitations.

And discernment will be our greatest ally, the champion of proper evaluation: never allowing an under- or over-evaluation. It will balance the vision of the telescope and the microscope, the eagle and the mouse. It transmits the gift of knowing where we stand, where we come from, where we are heading and the role of all that surrounds us during our journey. Discernment belongs to the mathematics of life. It is a martial art. It is a minuscule dot in the middle of riddles. It is balance and measure, harmony with our nature, our path and our mission. Discernment is an unencumbered route, as well as an assured, light step. Discernment allows the spiritual light

beams to illumine our path. Without discernment, we destroy matter. We keep it from following its natural calling. Nature is the fruit of infinite infused discernment. The little seed that emerges from the flower is a miracle of discernment. It knows how to associate with the elements that suit it. It knows how to unite, in the spiritual realms, to the thought-form that will give life to its own form in matter, the archetype that will define the plant it will become. Never, never does a carrot seed create inadvertently an association with a zinnia archetype!! How wondrous.

We need to enter nature, silent and open. Silence helps us to settle in and be receptive to the wonders of nature. Once we decide to be silent, we are no longer in charge. We will listen, not speak. We will follow, not lead. We are meant to be carriers of love and need to become conscious of this, so we free the love and let it shine from our eyes and ignite all beings and all things. This is how we renew the bonds, the pacts, the alliances.

It is always a joy and an honor to meet the truth of a flower. Flowers coach us so that we learn to *listen closely to the clear yet mysterious language of the Great Mother* —GOETHE. Flowers teach us perfection in detachment, impermanence, selflessness and fidelity to one's true divine essence. They die without fear and wave us goodbye, accepting with poise and grace, returning to the One as we all do. For isn't heaven only a breath away... perhaps only half a breath when we speak of flowers... ॐ

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Flowers on page 14 beginning at the top of the page: *california poppy, borage flowers, daisy, echinacia, gazania, hibiscus, lily, marigolds, osteospermum, tweedie.*