

Facets of Joy

Sharing the Gift of Presence
to Magnify your Inner Brilliance



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Raam Dev: Challenge What You Know to be Reality

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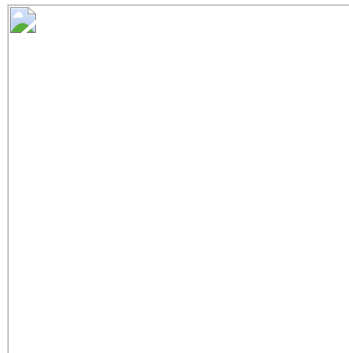
Written by **Joy**

[45 Comments](#)

Thank you for choosing to join me for my second interview in this month-long *series of interviews* with a few of the people who inspire me to “be excellent”: play big, explore, and experiment.

Today, I am delighted– **thrilled beyond words!**– to share energetic space with [Raam Dev](#). In life, I am a “feeler” and he is a “thinker”. His thoughts and ideas and the way he chooses to express them and to live them *fascinate and motivate me* to not only to consider the concept of exploration, but to apply what he shares within my own life.

When relating, mainstream tends to believe that we bond through our similarities; what I learn from knowing Raam is that the treasure is in opening beyond the comfort of your similarities to *connect through the exploration of your differences*. Following his *global vision and journey* has allowed me the opportunity to expand beyond my “borders” which has been transformational and life enriching. It is my pleasure to share a bit of Raam’s work, and his personality, with you!



Raam Dev is a writer, thinker, engineer, and nomad.

*He writes about our growing planetary social responsibility
and explores the fundamental principles that make us human*

J: I am drawn to your work because your online presence is one of *integrity and quality*. You don’t just write words on a page to captivate us, the reader, you live those words as you share them. Whether I am joyfully creating something new and different within my life– or feeling discouraged because my path is unconventional and I am lacking support–I can visit your site and your latest essay or thought is inspiring, affirming, motivating. May I ask, what motivates and encourages *you* as you create and explore?

R: Life motivates me. The fact that I’m a conscious, sentient being, capable of free thought and creation, that’s what motivates me.

When I walk through the world, I do so with an eye for what’s natural. I think my early fascination with science allows me to easily differentiate between what’s natural and what’s manmade.

A simple table seems pretty boring at first glance, but if you look at that table asking, “how far from its natural state is that table?”, then suddenly you realize the incredible volume of human ingenuity that went into the creation of that simple object.

When I look to the sky and I see an airplane flying above me, I'm dumbfounded every time: a giant piece of metal, carrying hundreds of human beings, soaring across the sky. That's incredible!

We humans have accomplished so much, and what's even more incredible is how much we have yet to learn. Our potential — the potential of life — that's what motivates me to explore. That's what drives me to continue creating.

That and an ever-present awareness of my mortality.

J: While my perspective tends to be quite local/ community oriented, your perspective is global. How was your perspective shaped and how do you continue to cultivate the global aspect while living here in the States?

R: I've always been fascinated by the seemingly endless variety within the human species. I can remember taking road trips with my parents and staring out the window for hours, watching thousands and thousands of cars go by.

Who were all those people? Where were they going? What were they doing?

When I turned those questions on myself, I realized that some of those people could be thinking the same thing about me. Who is that little boy staring out the window? What's he thinking? Where's he going?

I quickly began to realize that despite the immense volume of uniqueness and variety, we human beings are very much alike. We have many of the same cares and desires. When I traveled abroad for the first time in 2010, those assumptions became reality.

There I was on the other side of the planet, talking to human beings who will probably never see or know the people or places that I'm so familiar with. And yet like me, they all have mothers. They all require food and shelter. They all experience pain and sadness, joy and pleasure. They all aspire towards something better.

Cultivating a global perspective is, for me, about cultivating a human perspective. To recognize what makes us human and relate on that level. To ignore relating on the level of class, or belief, or geographic location, and rather relate on the fact that we all share something in common: we're human.

J: As you know, I recently took a professional risk within my own life—rather than rebuild upon something that I had “outgrown”, I choose to close my previous site to create this new site. You were highly instrumental in facilitating my decision—you continue to push past your own boundaries as you explore and you constantly create new and different within your life. A few questions then:

You recently completed a redesign on your own site. This includes a paid [journal subscription](#). May you share with us a little about the prompt for a redesign?

R: My site has literally undergone hundreds of redesigns in the past ten years. For the first few years, I had a nearly permanent “under construction” note somewhere on the site until I realized that, like myself, my site is subject to evolution; it's not static; it will always be ‘under construction’.

One rule I live and work by is that of ‘eating my own dog food’. In other words, I should enjoy reading my own writing and browsing my own site. If doing either gets boring — or feels difficult or uninviting — then I reevaluate what I'm doing and ask how I could improve.

I recently felt that several areas of my site were confusing, uninviting, and quite honestly getting boring. So I asked myself how I could improve that. I thought about the purpose for each page and asked what could be eliminated or added to better achieve the purpose of that page (much like I do in my own life). Then got to work implementing and experimenting.

J: As a subscriber to your journal pages, I notice that your writing style is a bit different— you seem to open from your heart and share your innermost thoughts. May you explain to us what is your general goal with your journal and does the process of creating within it differ from the process as you create for your site?

R: The process of creating in my journal definitely differs from that of my free essays. The essays are always a bit more refined, polished, and otherwise made more generally applicable.

Unlike many writers, I don't have a specific ‘audience’ that I write to; I write for human beings. So when I write my essays, I work hard to eliminate anything that doesn't assist conveying the core message of that essay.

While this often makes for easy-to-read and widely applicable writing, it also removes a lot of the more subtle thoughts and ideas that may have led to that core message.

My intention with the Journal is to share those deeper pieces of myself with the hope that they will inspire and encourage others to conduct their own inner exploration.

J: May you share with us your latest professional “risk”?

R: For the past two years, I've relied almost entirely on freelance work for income (WordPress and blogging related work) but I recently decided that for 2012 I'm going to stop pursuing freelance work.

This is risky in that it means I may not have income to support myself if my other business ventures don't work out, but I think this is a move necessary to focus my energy in the right direction.

J: What techniques do you use in pushing past your own boundaries?

R: My primary technique is that of recognizing how many boundaries and limitations are self-imposed. We are essentially limitless beings. The greatest barrier we will ever face is ourselves.

I also think about the people who came before me who overcame much greater challenges or who accomplished a great number of things simply because they put their mind to it.

I remind myself that I'm essentially no different than people like Mahatma Gandhi or Albert Einstein in terms of potential. Thinking that way always gives me a renewed perspective on whatever barrier I'm facing.

In fact, with all the advances we've had in technology, I'd say we have, all of us, a far greater opportunity to realize our full potential than those who came before us.

J: You often mention fear of stagnation. May you speak a little about this?

R: Stagnation to me represents unreality and untruth. The one constant in this universe is change, so stagnation doesn't really exist. But we can still fool ourselves into believing that change isn't necessary or that it's not happening.

When I feel stagnation in my life, I'm immediately reminded of the limited amount of time my physical body has on this Earth. No matter how stagnant or unchanged my life may be, time continues marching forward. Stagnation then represents a lack of appreciation for life, a lack of respect for our human potential.

This isn't just about physical movement. I believe we should be in a constant state of learning and exploration, which could even mean sitting down, closing our eyes, and exploring our inner universe.

J: As I was creating this new site, I chose to ignore the opinion's of others despite my own doubt. Instead of creating a site, I put my heart into it and created a vibrant community. The wisdom and clarity that you reflect through your work allowed me to consider options I might not have otherwise. I wonder: when *you* are creating and doubt surfaces, what resources do you rely upon as you continue to create.

R: I'd say the resource I rely upon more than anything else is my own intuition. I've learned trusting my intuition nearly always leads me in the right direction and that it's only when I doubt my intuition that I find myself creating the wrong things.

Besides that, there are a seemingly innumerable number of other creators who are sharing bits of their soul online and creating through their intuition. When doubt surfaces in spite of my intuition telling me it's the right thing to do, often all that's needed to get me back on track is to be open to what others are sharing.

Somehow, the right thing always finds me: A TED talk, a blog post, an email, a comment, a tweet. Sometimes it's as simple as a bird flying overhead that triggers the inspiration I needed to get back on track.

I could attempt to mention the people whose work has helped remove my self-doubt at one point or another, but the list would probably be about as long as this interview.

I think what's more important is recognizing that our self-doubt is often the result of feeling alone. Whenever I realize I'm not alone, my confidence is immediately restored.

J: If I may ask, what would you consider is the *source of your power*?

R: Much like the first question about what motivates and encourages me, I would say that my source of power is quite simply life itself. I am eternally inspired by existence.

My source of power seems to come from the universe. I'm alive. I exist. All that exists is somehow right here, within me. I was born among the stars. I was created from the same stuff that makes up everything else that exists in the universe. What immense power!

J: I am captivated by the fusion of your intelligence, integrity, and your quietly powerful voice. You are known as one who prefers not to contribute to noise; in a world where "fierce" and "loud" is equated with power, you model that one may be quiet, yet heard; one may create from a place of integrity and enrich others in big ways. May you share with us a little about your philosophy; how did you *find your voice* and how did this fusion come to be?

R: I find my voice by following the path to my heart. I'm constantly asking myself, "does this feel true to me?" If something I'm doing doesn't feel true to me, I ask, "what are my motivations?" If I'm motivated by anything but a desire to learn or share, I pull myself back and reconsider what I'm doing.

I take Mahatma Gandhi's advice, "be the change you wish to see in the world", to heart. I truly believe the best way to change the world is to change ourselves. If we're being loud or fierce externally we might get lots of attention, but we're not necessarily changing the world.

I believe the strength in silence comes from an aura of confidence. Everyone looks to those who are confident, even if they're the quiet ones. And I don't think confidence is about appearing to know it all, but rather about not looking for approval.

If you release the need for approval and validation, then suddenly you're free to create without compromise, to learn without arrogance, and to explore and share without expectations. You gain confidence because your motivations are pure.

Integrity is rooted in believing in ourselves, so we should start there. What do we believe, and why? Who are we, and why? Without being at peace with ourselves, we cannot expect others to be at peace with us.

J: As we look to the new year, what projects are you currently working on...what may we expect online from you in the near future?

R: I tend not to project myself out more than a few weeks ahead, so it's difficult to say what to expect. I also don't usually differentiate between 'online' and 'offline'; I feel that creates an unnecessary duality. They're both part of life, so I treat them as one in the same.

However, since you asked I will share what's on my mind for the next few months: I'm currently working on my annual transparency report, where I share and review my income and expenses for the previous year. I also have another ebook called 'Reflections' that I will be releasing.

My primary focus online will be in continuing to share through essays, journals, thoughts, and notes on my site. I've also had lots of interest in how I set up my publishing platform, so I will be working on a series of smaller ebooks and videos to share that knowledge.

Finally, my 'offline' project (see next question) will be closely linked to my online work.

J: And, of course, we would love to know what is your next adventure offline?

R: My next big adventure is about reconnecting modern life with nature.

I've always had two clear passions in life: nature and technology. The problem for me has been combining the two: I could play outside in the mud or I could play inside on my computer, but mud and computers generally don't fit well together.

Abandoning technology isn't an option: I believe that technology represents the ultimate expression of human creativity. It represents our innate desire to understand and shape the world around us, to take what we know of the world and create from it something that did not previously exist.

I also believe that technology enables sustainable human progress; it represents the answer to our planet's need for sustainability. Without technology, without exploring our innate desire to create, human progress would stall. But with technology, we can eliminate waste and work towards sustainability while still quenching our thirst for progress and exploration.

However, I believe there's a danger in becoming too engrossed in our creations: we can forget who we are. Without finding a balance, we'll expend our natural resources and our relationship with nature will deteriorate. We'll lose touch with what it means to be human.

I want to understand how we can create a balance between living connected and empowered by technology while still cultivating a relationship with nature. My next adventure will be an exploration into developing that balance.

For six months I will be hiking the Appalachian Trail with my laptop, a mobile data card, and a solar panel. The goal is to spend the entire six months outdoors using renewable energy while maintaining an online presence and even holding an Internet-based job.

Will it work? What challenges will I face? What will I learn about myself and about the current state of technology? Is creating that balance within reach? What's missing from our relationship between nature and technology? Those are some of the questions I plan to explore with this adventure.

J: It has been an honor to share energy with you in this space, thank you for allowing us a glimpse into your world. In closing, is there anything you would like us to know about you, your vision, your voice?

R: If I may, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to go on an adventure of your own, to, as Seth Godin would say, 'poke the box' a little.

Ask yourself what you believe about yourself and about the world around you. Now poke those beliefs with a strong stick. Are they solid? Why are they solid?

Challenge those boxes and break free of them. Challenge the status quo. Challenge what you know to be reality.

About Raam's Journal



"More mind-blowing awesomeness! Yours may be the first paid subscription that I will leave to run and run. Most don't make it to month two. You just keep coming up with the goods. Very pleased to have discovered your work in greater depth." - Ando Perez

The Journal is a portal to the world where my work is born. It offers insight into my creative process and a perspective that isn't available through my other writing. If you connect with my thoughts and essays, the Journal offers a continuation, a depth and breadth, to that exploration.

Access to the the Journal is offered through a monthly subscription of \$7.00/month, a price set using reader feedback. When you subscribe, new

Raam has so generously gifted this site with one complimentary lifetime subscription to his [journal](#).

Each reader who leaves a comment addressing the question below will be entered into a drawing. The winner will be randomly chosen Sunday, January 22, 2012 at 9pm (PST) *January 23, 2012* update: Raam is very scientific about this process; he put all of the reader's names into a random name generator and the "winner" of the drawing is Molly. Thank you to Raam and to all of the readers who participated in this interview! It is a pleasure to share energetic space with you all!*-Joy

May you share one currently held "limitation" that you want to challenge and then describe how you will challenge it?

Thank you, Raam! Thank you, dear reader! *Excellent* indeed:)

Much peace and abundant love,

Joy

Reminder: Experiment. Explore. Experience.

***You can read more on [raamdev.com](#) and follow him on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Google+](#).



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Comments on: "Raam Dev: Challenge What You Know to be Reality" (45)



1. [Raam Dev](#) said:
[January 8, 2012 at 7:10 pm](#)

Joy, thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to share here. Your questions were a thought-provoking and gave me much room to explore my own thoughts while doing this interview. Creating this was as much a journey for me as it might have been for anyone reading this. :)

Thank you for challenging me, and thank you for being you.

[Reply](#)



o [Joy](#) said:
[January 9, 2012 at 1:43 am](#)

Hi Raam,
Thank you for sharing space with me; allows *me* to challenge what I know to be *my* reality.

My answer to your question on a currently held limitation actually was *prompted by our interview*. I process life with a focus and awareness from my heart space. What I reflected upon this week is that for me to differentiate in words "heart space" and "mind space" is setting up a *self-limiting belief of duality* existing within my being. As a pulsating ball of energy, I

am *both* a thinker and a feeler—simultaneously. In my heart space I am cognizant of thought, yet habitually releasing that thought as it surfaces; likewise, in my mind space I am cognizant of feeling, yet habitually releasing that feeling as it surfaces.

This duality is self-limiting for me, because when I tell myself I am a “feeler” I am in essence telling my self *I am not* a thinker; thus, I do not invest in activities that “make me think” only because I have bought into my own belief that “thinking” is not within my realm of reality. Not only do I not invest in those activities, but I sometimes avoid them because I “won’t fit in”.

[Reply](#)



▪ **Raam Dev** said:
[January 9, 2012 at 12:25 pm](#)

And as you reflect on heart space and mind space creating a self-limiting duality, it helps me to recognize similar self-limiting dualities in my own life, so thank you.

We are not this or that, we just are, whole, complete. Telling ourselves we cannot do this or that creates self-limiting beliefs that hold us back from experiencing life and all the richness that it has to offer, richness in thinking *and* feeling forms. :)

[Reply](#)



2. **Ricky Ferdon** said:
[January 8, 2012 at 9:37 pm](#)

One currently held limitation that I wish to challenge is the idea that what we human beings “need” is to be found outside of ourselves: “out there”. I hold that all that we “need” is within. It is innate, i.e. we are born with it. I challenge it by using three primary sources of social media, my blog, Facebook, and Twitter. And I challenge it by the many interactions with my fellow humans that I have on an almost daily basis through volunteer mentoring. I am driven by first, love and compassion, and that premise that “that which we seek, we already have.” Namaste!

[Reply](#)



o **Raam Dev** said:
[January 9, 2012 at 9:28 am](#)

Ricky, thank you for sharing here.

The misconception (and I do believe this is a misconception and not something intentional) that the things we need or want can be found external to ourselves is something I feel is based in not truly knowing ourselves.

When we fall into the trap of believing that “we’re not good enough” or that someone else has more or knows more than we do, it creates a misleading view of reality.

The truth is, like you said, everything we need is right here within us. We just need to take that step inward. The best tool for that journey, the best support for that voyage, will be found in sharing the journey with others (independent publishing and social media make that process incredibly easy).

[Reply](#)



▪ **Joy** said:
[January 10, 2012 at 11:20 pm](#)

Hi Ricky,
It is nice to meet you:) Thank you for sharing a “limitation”.

love this: “I am driven by first, love and compassion”. When you allow your heart to guide you, you do not have the “pressure” of needing to know your self completely, because you have the innate trust that as love, you are whole and complete and you may share from this overflowing well of completeness. No limitation there!

When I read your namaste (thank you!), I would like to share that I have a practice of sending a silent namaste to everything as I move through my day. This practice reminds me of flow, energy, and interconnectedness. Thank *you* for sharing.

[Reply](#)



3. [Sandra / Always Well Within](#) said:
[January 8, 2012 at 10:36 pm](#)

I was touched by so many different aspects of what you've said here Raam, beginning with the way you so deeply feel the commonality of humanity. That is what will transform the world.

I also really treasure this insight: "If you release the need for approval and validation, then suddenly you're free to create without compromise, to learn without arrogance, and to explore and share without expectations. You gain confidence because your motivations are pure." Honestly, that's not necessarily easy to do, but I think it's truly the best aspiration we can have and work toward.

I'm looking forward to following your Appalachian adventure.

Joy, you have taken excellence to the top with this interview!

[Reply](#)



o [Raam Dev](#) said:
[January 9, 2012 at 9:34 am](#)

Thank you, Sandra. :)

I believe that releasing the need for approval and validation is as easy (or as difficult) as we choose to make it. Of course, without understanding ourselves, releasing anything can be difficult, so I think it's important that we start there.

Over the past few years I've learned so much about myself and with the learning came an increase in my capacity to release what wasn't inherently me. I feel I've only felt the tip of the iceberg... there is much for me to discover on this journey and I have no doubt it will be a lifelong endeavor! :)

[Reply](#)



▪ [Joy](#) said:
[January 10, 2012 at 11:32 pm](#)

Sandra,

Thank you for the lovely words:)

As far as release, I do agree with Raam that is as easy (or as difficult) as we choose to make it. I respect Raam's work because it is with integrity; I know he creates from his center of truth. As do I, and this is where we bond through our work.

When you create from your truth, external "anything" is no longer necessary, because that truth is complete and draws to you the energy of complete-ness.

I differ from Raam in that I do not need to fully understand my self to release external, I just need to be fully *present to the moment* to feel abundant and whole and external has no bearing on that. When I am in my mind space, the "need" for validation surfaces; when I am in my heart space, that need doesn't even exist so there isn't anything to "release".

Thank you for allowing me to share my perspective.

[Reply](#)



4. [Tamara Epps](#) said:
[January 9, 2012 at 2:43 am](#)

I really enjoyed reading this interview and found the idea of cultivating a human perspective a perfect explanation of what you do, Raam, and something I am always interested in.

As for a limitations I have, the most pressing one right now is to do with my health. I have spent the last few years feeling a mix of guilt and unfairness at having a chronic disability which has altered my view of the world.

I am hoping this year to embrace the fact that it is part of me and learn to work with it, rather than against it.

At the same time I am going to start exploring my own views of the world and society without allowing my disability to cloud my vision or impact my thoughts.

[Reply](#)



o **Raam Dev** said:
[January 9, 2012 at 9:49 am](#)

Thank you, Tamara.

I know from personal experience that when our health isn't optimal, it can make the rest of life extremely challenging. However, I also believe such "limitations" can be a catalyst for inner growth, a means of refocusing our energy inward to learn more about ourselves and about the powers that make us who we are (ailments and all).

Embracing the possibility that reality as we know it may not be reality at all, is also a powerful way to change the perspective on our health problems.

As I'm sure Joy can attest to, the modern world likes to assume that it has all the answers and that it can tell us with certainty what's wrong with us or what we should do to fix it.

In reality though, there is a much greater force at work, a metaphysical force that only we have the power connect with, tap into, and use to heal our physical bodies.

[Reply](#)



▪ **Joy** said:
[January 10, 2012 at 11:44 pm](#)

Tamara,
Nice to meet you:)
Such courage—thank you for sharing so transparently!

I would like to reflect to you the reminder that we are not our physical bodies—though they are the vehicles we use while on Earth, we are so much more than that vehicle. As you embrace your illness, you are embracing *you*—empowering!

When I read this: "At the same time I am going to start exploring my own views of the world and society without allowing my disability to cloud my vision or impact my thoughts" I am so excited for you! May I share this reflection please...when I was diagnosed with stage 3 cancer a few years back, I at first felt "different"—I had something the people around me did not. A "limitation" if you will. However, initially I knew it wasn't "going anywhere, it was part of me" so when I embraced that difference, it allowed me a unique perspective—this having something different gave me the ability for a depth of gratitude and joy at *living* that many around me did not seem to have. The moment I released resistance to my "limitation" it became my *inspiration* to embrace the present moment, to open my heart to love most fully, to experiment and explore—and I am still *here*...So, I agree with Raam's statement: "...there is a much greater force at work, a metaphysical force that only we have the power connect with, tap into, and use to heal our physical bodies."

[Reply](#)



5. **Molly** said:
[January 9, 2012 at 6:12 am](#)

Profoundly inspiring, as always! And now, it appears, I have a new site to explore (I came by this by way of Raam's site...). Two thoughts to share here. One, how Raam's newest of adventure somewhat parallels an issue I have been contemplating for a couple years now, as my life online has increased exponentially (due, mainly, to taking a new direction in my career path); namely, how can we transform our use of technology, without simply shunning it from our lives, to be a positive force in the human evolution to living more consciously & lovingly rather than a thing which separates us from not only living in the natural world, but connecting to others authentically, rather than superficially?

Two, my greatest limitation right now seems to be breaking through the fear I feel about the need to make a drastic change in my career to move toward fulfilling my soul's purpose and align my daily energy expenditure doing what I love deeply rather than attempting to *just* attain financial "security" and live a comfortable life. I feel like my fear of giving up the "comforts" financial security has afforded me after years of living in "survival mode," is holding me back from sharing the creative gifts I have to share.

I also feel like I don't have a clear enough vision of HOW I can best share these gifts with the world or how I want to, which leaves me feeling stuck. I suppose I am attempting to figure out how to get "unstuck" and move forward with the level of integrity that I see from people like Raam and Joy here. Trusting in the natural laws of abundance while being uncertain of the exact "how" of getting where one wants to go, requires a leap of faith that I am not sure I'm prepared to take yet.

I feel like these two issues are distinctly married as I contemplate creating an online venue to share my creations with the world, but don't want to be just adding to the "noise" of the online world that I see in many ways negatively impacting people's ability to live in a connected and authentic way. As people spend increasing amounts of time online, they seem to grow less connected with the people in their lives, with the natural rhythms of life, and with their own creative energies. Ironically, as our "social media" outlets and opportunities to connect with like-minded people online grow, people are feeling more and more disconnected and alone than ever, directly proportionate to the amount of time they spend "connecting" online it seems. I want to find a way to bring meaningful connection back into to people's lives that allows them to deepen their relationships and their living experience in the non-virtual, offline world, rather than just create more ways for them to "escape" living their lives by engaging in the online world that lends itself to superficiality and at some points, unhealthy obsession.

Until I can figure out a way to do that, or if that is even possible using online methods of delivery, I am not sure I want to create an online "presence" of any great depth (I have been experimenting with blogging for the past few months in an effort to explore this "creating an online presence," but I am hesitant about the value to negative impact ratio of even this minimal presence). For all these reasons, I am supremely interested in following Raam's latest adventures to see what he discovers and how he answer's some of these questions.

Thank you both for sharing this as an example of the power of technology to have a positive impact on people's lives! Joy, I look forward to exploring your site some more as I have time.

[Reply](#)



Raam Dev said:
[January 9, 2012 at 10:17 am](#)

Molly, thank you for sharing your thoughts here. This is exactly why I love technology. :)

I hear your frustration and perhaps even your distaste for building an online presence... with the prospect of putting energy into an online-based venture of any type. The thought of abandoning technology altogether has come to my mind many times throughout my life, but what always brings me back is reminding myself of the incredible potential the Internet awards the human race and the reality that technology is here to stay.

With that in mind, I realize that what's needed is balance. What's needed is better ways of utilizing these new tools.

Technology is in its infancy, so it can be expected that we humans, as a species, won't quite "get it" for at least a few generations. Right now the Internet is this big shiny toy, a cool way to talk to people across great distances, to share things we think are funny or inspirational or to share knowledge and experiences with others because we feel it may help someone.

That last bit is where I think there's incredible potential. If we share our experience, share our truth, share what we believe, then it will give others the courage to do the same. And if others gain the courage to speak up, they will end up changing the world in the process (the Internet is already making this happen... it's just happening too slowly for anyone to really notice).

With regard to finding a balance that doesn't feel like we're just wasting away our lives online: I think each of us needs to find that balance for ourselves. For example, I know that Joy enjoys connecting with people in person, so she's made her meetups a facet of this site. She's finding her own way to create that balance. I know that I communicate best through writing and through occasionally meeting face-to-face. You'll need to find your own balance, your own unique blend of "delivery methods".

Most importantly, I think our motivations need to be pure. If we're online purely for financial reasons, then we're not going to find balance no matter how hard we look.

I also feel that the best way to embrace abundance is to remove that which makes us feel scarcity. For me, that meant getting all my possessions down to one backpack.

That backpack is currently sitting in the chair across the table from me as I type this comment. All my stuff is right there. That reality instantaneously makes me feel like I have everything I need and more in this world. I feel abundant. When my finances are extremely low and I don't know how I'll make it through the next month, I still feel a sense of abundance.

It's hard to explain, but I think that we all need to explore what's creating scarcity in our lives and release that. It might be possessions. It might also be relationships, or personal or family expectations. It could even be beliefs or world-views that are invalid and that we need to release.

We, ourselves, are the only ones who can experiment and make those discoveries. :)

[Reply](#)



■ **Joy said:**
[January 10, 2012 at 11:59 pm](#)

Hi Molly,
Nice to meet you:)
And wow..thank you for sharing..
I think Raam addressed it all very well..

My one addition would be sometimes we get hung up on “how” and we let that stop us. May I reflect: we do not need to know how, we may just identify our truth and find our way from there. I tend to be one who “leaps” in life...as Raam tends to embark upon somewhat extreme adventures—these ‘work’ for us because we are equipped internally to leap and adventure. We both share our stories not because we think “everyone” should leap and adventure, but because we are examples of what living from personal truth looks and feels like—perhaps to inspire others to create from their own truth.

As Raam explained, I have a different approach in my use of technology. I love the connection of community, so I combine my offline and online communities. I have met and spent time with many of my peers at my home and in theirs. And, I take “Facets” on the road through meetups and conferences because I want to physically know and connect with my readers so we “feel” the community we are in. And my approach to social media is the same: I open the windows for fresh air, light a candle, play some music, and relate “online”...much like I am present in person...I find it fun and exciting rather than a cumbersome chore as some do. That is my truth in this forum. Do I know “how” to do it? Not always..but I show up/allow my self to be present, and it flows naturally.

[Reply](#)



6.

■ **Kelly said:**
[January 9, 2012 at 10:36 am](#)

Thanks for the inspiring and touching interview. It spoke to me in many ways. I loved what Raam said about “life” being his motivation. My spiritual beliefs are evolving in the direction of all life being sacred because they hold “the” life giving energy and wisdom.

A current limiting belief: if I openly shared my spiritual beliefs I’d be considered a flake and lose credibility in my career. Ouch! I really don’t like admitting that. But just writing it “out loud” here has helped me see that it is quite silly.

[Reply](#)



○ **Raam Dev said:**
[January 9, 2012 at 12:21 pm](#)

You’re most welcome, Kelly! Thank you for finding the courage to admit that limitation!

Writing things out has been an incredible way for me to bring reality to that which feels stuffed away and hidden. Sharing those things publicly makes them even more real and allows us to embrace what is instead of pretending they don’t exist.

And sometimes, writing them out makes us realize that they’re not such a big deal after all. :)

I like to remind myself that my physical presence here on Earth is limited to a few years, a century perhaps. Then that’s it. I’m gone. Never to be seen in my present physical form ever again.

When I look at things from that perspective, all of the things like lack of credibility, or lack of approval, or even failure, all of them seem so insignificant, they seem like such a distraction from what matters, such a thief to the one thing we must hold close: now.

[Reply](#)



■ **Joy said:**
[January 11, 2012 at 12:16 am](#)

Hi Kelly,
Thank you for sharing!
I completely understand this: “if I openly shared my spiritual beliefs I’d be considered a flake and lose credibility in my career”.

When I worked at the local hospital, I was originally reluctant to share my beliefs in energy work; I thought I would be shunned and no longer accepted. (Thought is the key: fear is in the mind!) However, honoring my commitment to energy is in essence *honoring me*. When I didn't honor it fully, I became physically ill (the mind/body connection is huge for me) and mentally exhausted...eventually the discomfort within outweighed any perceived discomfort externally. I also have the truth that I tend to light up the room anyway, so the only person I was "hiding from" was me :)

May I also reflect that when we practice and live our beliefs openly, we draw to us "like practiced people" and being in community allows us to experience and explore comfortably a depth and range that might not be possible otherwise. When I became comfortable openly sharing my energy work at the hospital, not only was I not shunned, but I was also widely accepted and people whom I never would have expected sought me out for "light".

[Reply](#)



7. [sui solitaire](#) said:
[January 9, 2012 at 1:34 pm](#)

Really loved this interview.

What holds me back the most is feeling like I "have to" do things a certain way. That I "have to" live in a certain place or do certain things every day. This is a particularly insidious obstacle because these "shoulds" don't actually come from the external world, but from myself! I have really high expectations of myself sometimes.

I do my best to be kind and gentler with myself when this happens. To foster understanding and empathy rather than to force myself to do something, almost violently.

[Reply](#)



o [Raam Dev](#) said:
[January 10, 2012 at 8:59 am](#)

Thank you, Sui! :)

I've learned that self-imposed expectations arise from believing that we need to be like someone else. When I accepted the truth that I am 100% unique, all those expectations fell away.

I'm constantly reminding myself that I'm on a unique journey, as is everyone else in the world. None of us *need* to walk someone else's journey (although unfortunately many of us try). We are unique and our journey through life is unique. We can learn from the journey's of others, but we can really only walk our own. :)

[Reply](#)



▪ [Joy](#) said:
[January 11, 2012 at 12:26 am](#)

Hi Sui,
Thank you for sharing!

When I feel I 'have' to do something a certain way, I turn that inward and ask my self what am I resisting by trying to exert control over something? If my mind is locked into a certain way or routine, I wonder what fear am I masking by 'wanting' this control. And I check in with my heart to see if there is something I wish to express or create that I am not allowing my self to.

When I read this: "rather than to force myself to do something, almost violently" I am heartened that you choose to be kind and gentle with your self.

[Reply](#)



8. [Evelyn Lim](#) said:
[January 9, 2012 at 7:05 pm](#)

Joy, I enjoyed this interview. You have certainly explored a couple of enlightening issues with Raam. It is also nice to know that Raam has been the one who encouraged you to start a new site. This site definitely looks more vibrant, with the changes.

Raam, thumbs up to what you said about “Abandoning technology isn’t an option: I believe that technology represents the ultimate expression of human creativity. It represents our innate desire to understand and shape the world around us, to take what we know of the world and create from it something that did not previously exist.” Also the part on finding the balance between nature and technology. I totally agree and have been trying to find that balance myself. I see social media and blogging as a platform for expressing my voice. At the same time, I avoid spending excessive time online and log off regularly to stay present to the world around.

[Reply](#)



o **Raam Dev** said:
[January 10, 2012 at 9:08 am](#)

Thank you, Evelyn! :)

I suspect balance will be achieved through learning to be present. The only times I’ve felt fully at peace using technology was when I also felt fully present.

I think nature has a way of encouraging us to be present, perhaps even to be pulled to the past, while technology pulls us forward and towards the future. Neither one alone will help us balance in the middle, but with focused intention, I think we, as human beings, have the power to pull that balance together. :)

[Reply](#)



▪ **Joy** said:
[January 11, 2012 at 12:34 am](#)

Hi Evelyn,
Thank you for the kinds words!

grin Raam has certainly inspired me greatly (thank you, Raam!), but this website is solely *me*. And I think very reflective of my new vibrancy and vibration from my latest paradigm shift.

I think you have a wonderful way of balancing, Evelyn, thank you for sharing!

Like Raam, my moments of inner peace are when I am fully present, regardless of my task. I spend my morning hours on the computer and my afternoon hours at the beach, with many days off to “just be” in the hills and on the ocean and in the presence of love and laughter. While I look forward to following Raam’s AT adventure, I personally would not be adept at working online while on the trails; but Raam’s example inspires me to look within my own life and examine how may I combine technology with a long sailing trip. (Thank you, again, Raam, you continue to inspire me to consider new and different!)

[Reply](#)



9. **susan** said:
[January 10, 2012 at 7:01 am](#)

Hi Joy and Raam – Wow what an interview! How inspiring too. How we evolve creatively and spiritually while trying to achieve a sense of balance in a rather rockin’ world provides stories, lessons and experiences worth sharing!
Thank you for sharing yours.

And Joy, great questions. I found you at Barbs – read you started a new site and wanted to come cheer you on! I will surely be back as I just subscribed. Good wishes and a big hug too,
Susan

[Reply](#)



o **Raam Dev** said:
[January 10, 2012 at 9:14 am](#)

Thank you, Susan! :) You're so right; we evolve through sharing. All of those stories and experiences contribute to a beautiful whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

[Reply](#)



■ **Joy said:**

[January 11, 2012 at 12:36 am](#)

Hi Susan,
Nice to meet you:) *love* your energy!

Thank you for the kind words and the support; I appreciate it! I've been online a few years, but this site has its own energy and it is wonderful to meet new people:)

A warm, energetic hug to you:)

[Reply](#)



10.

○ **Sara said:**

[January 10, 2012 at 9:36 am](#)

Joy — Thanks for letting me know about this post. This is one of the best interviews I've read in a long time!

Raam — There's so much to love about what you said in this interview. You touched a subject dear to my heart with these words, "Cultivating a global perspective is, for me, about cultivating a human perspective."

I've always believed more in what unites us than separates us. For example, our emotions are a universal language — we all feel love, hate, anger and awe at some in our lives, even if we speak different verbal languages. So, I was very taken with your comment about our shared humanity. I also think until we embrace the universal connections we all have, the world will continue to face troubles.

The sincerity of your beliefs shines from the words of this interview. I found myself nodding as I read:~) I also agree the connections we make via blogging and being online can inspire us to do more and be more. So many times when I've felt a bit lost or uncertain of where I'm to go next, making my visits to the posts written by others will totally change my perspective.

Good luck with your new ventures. I plan to go over to your site and sign up for the journal. It will another place for me to go when I need a reminder of my own place in this world.

Thank you, Joy, for sharing Raam with us:~)

[Reply](#)



○ **Joy said:**

[January 11, 2012 at 12:47 am](#)

Sara,
Thank you for the kinds words:)

Of course, I would share Raam with you, I love him and knew you would, too:)

And, your work inspires me greatly. Your story prompts and photos and creativity inspire me to step out of my "little box" of labels and experiment with photography and fiction and poetry.

As to this: "So many times when I've felt a bit lost or uncertain of where I'm to go next, making my visits to the posts written by others will totally change my perspective." I have found that I would gravitate to a few sites, such as Raam's and Evita's (evolvingbeings.com) when I was considering creating something that the people around me would not understand. That they both create with integrity from truth, and do not have to "fit in" to mainstream affirms some of my own choices. What that reflected to me, though, was that I was not 'affirmed' within (because a lot of what I create tends to be new and different so I have fear, and take that fear along for the ride)...and that I was not affirmed externally, so it gave me the opportunity to reflect upon who I surround my self with online and offline and to allow for appropriate changes.

Love you..huge energetic hug to you:)

[Reply](#)



o [Raam Dev said:](#)
[January 11, 2012 at 12:57 pm](#)

Sara,

Thank you for sharing here and thank you for subscribing to my journal. :)

I'm in full agreement with what you said about believing in what unites us. I feel the Internet has allowed us to embrace more of who we are and recognize how much of us exists in everyone else. Anyone can now get online and with a little effort discover people with whom they can easily relate.

And in discovering such commonalities, I believe we're inspired to push past any limitations we feel are holding us back. When we hear of others just like us, who had all the same (if not more) barriers than we do and yet still overcame them, it gives us the inspiration we need to move forward.

(I can relate directly to this: it was reading the stories of two other bloggers who broke away from the 9-to-5 and traveled world despite financial constraints that inspired me to quit my 9-to-5 job and start traveling back in 2010.)

[Reply](#)



11. [Talon said:](#)
[January 10, 2012 at 11:18 am](#)

I finally had time to make a cup of tea and settle in to read a most enlightening and uplifting interview. Thank you, Joy, and thank you, Raam. Reading an interview like this reminds me that there are people out there who truly care what impact they have on the world and on the people they encounter on their journey.

Wishing you much luck and success on your new ventures, Raam. Something tells me you'll be very successful :)

[Reply](#)



o [Joy said:](#)
[January 11, 2012 at 12:57 am](#)

Hi Talon,
Thank you for the kind words:)

I really want to ask what kind of tea is it? I love that you drink tea while you read—thank you for that!

May I reflect that when I originally found Raam's site, I loved his message because it was so refreshingly new and different to me. However, when I met him, I resisted knowing him because I was "afraid" of those differences, but once I released fear I find it a joy to not only *connect through* them, but to learn from them. Much like I do not understand Raam's desire to blend the AT hike with technology, but I am thoroughly *intrigued* by his willingness to live his truth fully in such a transparent way and I know I will learn a lot from his journey that I may apply to my own creations within my own life. So, I am completely appreciative, even though I do not understand. And that appreciation allows me to grow past what I know.

And, *your* work inspires me to open my heart most fully..your words and photos are ones I reflect upon and allow to journey to my inner core.

Thank *you* for being you!

[Reply](#)



o [Raam Dev said:](#)
[January 11, 2012 at 12:58 pm](#)

Talon,

Thank you for reading and for the well wishes. I wish you much success on your own journey! :)

[Reply](#)



12. [Peggy Nolan](#) said:
[January 10, 2012 at 7:01 pm](#)

Joy,

I absolutely love this interview with Ram Dev. I know I will re-read this numerous times.

Funny that I read this right after my girlfriend did a Tarot card reading for me. Boy oh boy if the what you and Ram discussed here and what the last question you asked is didn't line up exactly with part of my reading.

My limitation is about work and what I do outside my writing, yoga, and all the other yummy things I do. Work – my day job – the thing I'm oh so not passionate about but continue to do it because can I really go out on a limb? Can I really create without the safety net and security blanket? I think I've been working on challenging this limitation my entire adult life. At the very least I've taught my daughters to go out on the limb. To do something different.

[Reply](#)



o [Joy](#) said:
[January 11, 2012 at 1:03 am](#)

Hi Peggy,
Thank you for sharing energy here—love you!

Glad you love Raam, his message is one that I knew would resonate within you.

Guess what my friend, you're on the limb..this is why I love you...so no need worrying about "can you go out on it"...you're there. And I am out there with you.

I *love* this: "taught my daughters to go out on the limb" because I have done the same with my children (although they are younger)..and what they reflect back to me is priceless—especially when I have doubt, they have none! They use my own words and ideas and examples to remind me of: empowerment and infinite possibility. Which is what *you* reflect to me..and what I reflect right back to you.

Huge, energetic hug:)

[Reply](#)



o [Raam Dev](#) said:
[January 11, 2012 at 1:03 pm](#)

Peggy,

The universe has a way of giving us exactly what we need, when we need it, given that we're open to receiving it. :)

Your limitation is one that I held for a long time (and still work towards challenging in one degree or another). What I realized is that unless we actually go out on that limb (create without a safety net), how will we know if it can be done? I think we need to push our preconceived limitations to the point of failure.

We need to discover where that limb will actually begin to bend under our weight and then work towards overcoming challenges from that perspective. If we sit safely on the secure part of the limb, how can we know how far we must go before it begins to bend? What if we're no where near the end of the limb... what if we're actually sitting right next to the trunk? :)

[Reply](#)



13. [Talon](#) said:
[January 11, 2012 at 10:52 am](#)

Joy, my tea of choice these days is Orange Pekoe (it was my mother's favorite)

That's what I love about you, Joy. You open yourself to new ideas and, while you question it, you honour that everyone has a unique journey.

Thank you for your kind comments on my writing and photography. Both bring me necessary time-outs in my life. :)

[Reply](#)



o

Joy said:

[January 13, 2012 at 4:38 am](#)

Talon,

I only ask because I love tea..one of my “favorite” activities is to share tea with friends while at the marina clubhouse—kind of like my “porch” looking out over the harbor and the glorious view. My latest favorite flavor is mint.

As for unique journeys—thank you for that reflection. I was experiencing strain in a connection that is normally refreshing and “easy”; I turned that to explore inward and realized yesterday that the strain was because I wasn’t honoring our very different approaches to creating and moving along our individual paths. Once I released that, it was refreshing and “easy” again.

And, my time out is the beach :)

[Reply](#)



14.

Ando Perez said:

[January 16, 2012 at 8:36 am](#)

May you share one currently held “limitation” that you want to challenge and then describe how you will challenge it?

I strongly desire to be a meditation teacher. It is my greatest passion.

My current limitation in this is that although I have taught meditation before, I stopped, because I didn’t feel adequately qualified. Despite 30+ years on the spiritual path, formal Buddhist study and training, a strong personal practice, I felt under confident.

My way of challenging this is to take my study and practice deeper. Rather than buy some easy to obtain bit of paper qualification, I set out to study more deeply, to practice more deeply, and to write and share my thoughts and experiences. I am working towards training as a yoga teacher. In two years I will be qualified in that. I thought I would wait until then. But I have decided to focus my efforts on studying with great meditation teachers along the way, and through pushing the edges of my practice. The qualification to teach, in my own case, must come from within. So it will.

[Reply](#)



o

Raam Dev said:

[January 16, 2012 at 8:57 am](#)

Ando, thank you for sharing here. :)

Your “limitation” reminds me of something that happens to me all the time: I often feel unqualified to teach or share what I know because I feel an ever-present awareness of how little I actually know.

But I think we need to remember that others may greatly benefit from what we know. When we’re always looking forward and up — towards how much we have yet to learn and experience — it’s easy to forget that others may be looking up at us.

Any limitations we feel on sharing are self-imposed and the sooner we break past those, the more quickly we will grow.

[Reply](#)



▪

Joy said:

[January 19, 2012 at 2:47 pm](#)

Hi Ando,

What a pleasure to ‘meet you’ here.

I love that you are expanding your awareness and centering your presence by choosing to study meditations with the “great teachers”! What an awesome opportunity for you and all whom you relate with—! can only imagine the sense of peace and serenity around you!

I “agree” with Raam..while I understand your desire for “excellence” before teaching, your story and what you know in this moment could be incredibly inspiring to someone “now” as they perhaps consider their path and how meditation might expand awareness in their life. I learn so much from those just a few steps “ahead” of me on this path...sometimes they kind of inch me along when I am resistant...just as I do when I shine the light for someone just a few steps “behind” me...

Thank you, Ando, for knowing your passion, and choosing to create with that passion, and not only to create but to create excellence. What you reflect in this is very affirming to me!

[Reply](#)



15.

June said:

[January 20, 2012 at 9:32 pm](#)

The current limitations that I want to challenge. Despite past hurts and pain, I am training myself to think straight again, to be objective and clear my head of unnecessary stimulus. I commit to be well-versed in development, creative activism and writing. I will make decision based on what I should be doing, not what people think I should be doing.

Thank you Raam Dev and Joy.

[Reply](#)



Raam Dev said:

[January 21, 2012 at 9:11 pm](#)

Thank you for sharing here, June. :)

Making decisions based on what we should be doing instead of what others think we should be doing... I love that! It's so easy to lose sight of ourselves and of our own sense of direction when everybody else is offering us a map, directions, and sometimes even a ride!

[Reply](#)



Joy said:

[January 22, 2012 at 4:44 am](#)

Hi June,

Very empowering words you share: processing through past hurts and pain, to commit to growth and creative expression as you follow your path; quite a heart opening! Thank you for all that your words reflect:)

[Reply](#)



16.

June said:

[January 20, 2012 at 9:34 pm](#)

There will be a day, when the unbearable pain we have suffered or is suffering would be of the greatest asset to us when we unload it from within.

[Reply](#)

Please share your voice: "Raam Dev: Challenge What You Know to be Reality"

When you share, we learn!

Name

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Message

Notify me of followup comments via e-mail. You can also [subscribe](#) without commenting.

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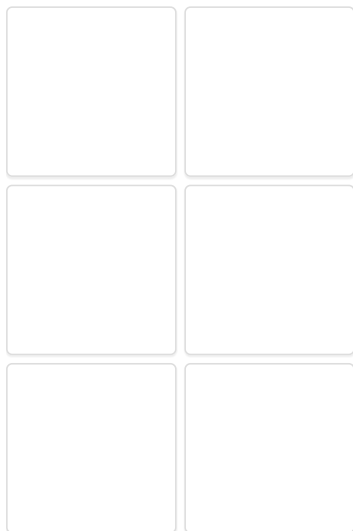
I use it to share treats and experiences with my children that our budget doesn't cover.



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I find the beauty in everything and I love to play with the sunset.

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Code is poetry