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Personal Growth/Spirituality

“Everything you need to create healthy, fulfilling relationships, using ancient wisdom, beautiful stories, tools, and exercises. This book is a must read . . .”

—Arielle Ford, Author of *Wabi Sabi Love* and *The Soulmate Secret*

“In the Lotus of the Heart is a profound and inspiring lesson in healing our love, lives, and ourselves by using ancient spiritual wisdom. I recommend it wholeheartedly.”

—Brenda Wade, PhD
Author of *Love Lessons* and *99 Things You Wish You Knew Before Falling in Love*

We highly recommend this book to anyone seeking more fulfilling, enlightened relationships.”

—Drs. Evelyn and Paul Moschetta
Marriage counselors and authors of *The Marriage Spirit* and *Are You Roommates or Soul Mates?*

IN THE LOTUS OF THE HEART

The Essence of Relationships Shubhrajī

Vedanta teacher Shubhrajī was moved to write *In the Lotus of the Heart: The Essence of Relationships* because, “People everywhere talk to me about the same relationship issues. Many feel lonely; often they’re cut off from loved ones because of seemingly unresolvable conflicts or communication problems, or they suffer in stale, loveless, or even abusive relationships. As a species, we’re wired to reach out, connect, and relate to others, but we seek love or try to solve relationship problems using the same strategies that created the problems in the first place. Once we realize that our outer conflicts reflect our inner states, we can move toward greater integration internally and more loving, fulfilling relationships with others.”

Accessible and practical, *In the Lotus of the Heart* illuminates how to connect more deeply with our beloveds, parents, children, and friends and shows how relationships are a vital tool for neutralizing the effects of past conditioning. Using examples readers can identify with, the author guides us toward harmonious relations with others that we all long for. Simple exercises at the conclusion of each chapter provide practice opportunities that anyone can benefit from.



Shubhrajī is a contemporary Vedanta teacher with an international following and began her spiritual work at age fourteen as a disciple of the renowned Vedanta master H. H. Swami Chinmayananda. Originally from India, Shubhrajī took an early interest in the ancient nondualistic philosophy of Vedanta.

Now based in Woodstock, New York, she teaches and travels throughout the United States, Asia, and Europe. Using Sanskrit texts such as the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads, she conducts programs for both Eastern and Western audiences in various centers and institutions, including the Harvard Business School, London Business School, St. John’s College, and the Ross Institute. She also offers weekend intensives that include yoga asanas. *In the Lotus of the Heart* is her first book. For more information, please visit www.inthelotusoftheheart.com.

Shubhraj

Q & A's

1. There are so many relationship books available today. How is your book different?

In the Lotus of the Heart is about discovering the roots of relationships—the essence of relationships—and what they are made of. It shows the reader how to uncover and reconnect with their own inner being and invites them to redesign their thinking, which quickly brings about an external shift.

Caught up, as we are, in the intricate web of life, we have forgotten that our primary relationship in life is with ourselves. We mistakenly give more importance to fostering healthy relationships with others and struggling to manage them—aspects addressed by most other relationship books. My book, on the other hand, brings one's relationship with oneself into the limelight and shows how attending to this connection brings about healthier and more meaningful interpersonal relationships.

2. Please explain the title of your book. What does the lotus flower symbolize in terms of human relationships?

The lotus flower grows in muddy water yet exhibits an inherent beauty and purity. Just as the budding lotus is nourished by the mud it grows from, our journeys in life are fueled by our limitations and challenges; but once we realize that our outer conflicts reflect our inner states, we can reach beyond them by recognizing our inherent wholeness. In doing so, our core values become clearer, deeper dimensions of our personality begin to bloom, and we experience greater harmony in our relationships.

3. Why, in your opinion, do we struggle so much with relationships of all sorts—with family, lovers, friends, colleagues, neighbors, even sales clerks? How can your book help readers resolve these struggles?

Each individual is endowed with unique gifts and abilities. But unfortunately, due to the demands of our lifestyles, over time people forget about their talents or become unable to harness them. The resulting disconnect between our inner lives and our awareness of them allows inner conflicts to creep into our relationships with others no matter how important they may be to us.

In the Lotus of the Heart invites the reader to start looking within for answers. It also demonstrates how to change our thinking in ways that contribute to a more peaceful emotional body. An emotional body that is at ease sets the foundation for establishing healthy relationships.

4. What is Vedanta, and how can it help people improve their interactions with others?

Vedanta is the universal philosophy revealed by the ancient Himalyan masters, before 1200 BCE, who meditated on the question “Who Am I?” It gives us an understanding of our true nature and connects us to our essence, the source of joy. Through teachings on service, love, and knowledge, it awakens a vision of the “one reality,” which transcends race, creed, class, gender, and nationality. Hallmarks of this philosophy are the direct method of self-inquiry and meditation.

In practical terms, Vedanta shows us the distinctions between that which is long lasting or permanent and that which is transient or illusory. The key to joy is to shift our focus to a higher perspective. When we work on our relationships from this angle, they become doorways to a more meaningful life for ourselves and others.

5. Does one need to know the ancient scriptures, Sanskrit, or Vedanta practices to benefit from your book?

Readers need no prior knowledge to read the book and apply the concepts in their lives. The ideas are presented very simply and the concepts are universal. The few Sanskrit words that appear are clearly defined. Also included are day-to-day examples involving people from all walks of life. This book is meant for anyone who is interested in relationship issues.

6. In the context of relationships, how did you implement the teachings of Vedanta in your own life? Give us an example.

Even as a self-absorbed teenager I was drawn to Vedanta, the idea of the oneness of our existence, the benefits of calming the mind through selfless service, and the importance of transcending conflict and being in harmony with life. I was fortunate that my mother was also drawn to these teachings. In fact, while studying Vedanta the first visible change for me involved my relationship with my mother. I noticed we had become closer; I was more tolerant toward her when she gave me suggestions; and I had begun to appreciate the way she balanced the many spheres of her life. Next I discovered I was becoming aware of the needs of *many* people around me.

Then the biggest shift occurred: I became enthusiastic about serving others. Vedanta emphasizes karma yoga—selfless actions toward all—so although I was surprised, it made sense that I'd begun feeling more compassionate toward people and willing to help them.

7. What is the most important lesson you learned from your teacher, Swami Chinmayananda, that has helped you in creating and maintaining relationships?

The most valuable learning I received from my teacher was to view people and situations from every perspective before taking action. Swamiji taught me how to make decisions in the best interests of people concerned and from the highest spiritual point of view.

While observing him over the years, I saw that he established eye contact with each person he talked to and gave them his complete attention no matter what. Also I saw his genuine concern for their well-being and his ability to make them feel special and loved. To him, everyone was a reflection of the one true self.

As his teachings took root in me, I began to realize that each human being is divine and that dealing with people from this perspective eased my ability to create and sustain relationships worldwide. Simply put, approaching each person with love has been the biggest gain in my life!

For additional information, or to book Shubhrajī, please contact
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