



The Magic of Manifestation Reading List

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This is neither a comprehensive nor a definitive reading list. Nor does it represent the “best of” what I have read in the many years I have spent studying spiritual systems around the world. These are just the books that came to mind as I gave some thought to what it would be useful for you to read, given the content of this course.

With each week’s homework I have put down a book (and, in the later stages, two books) which, I feel, have some bearing on the material I have presented in that week. Sometimes this connection is quite explicit: Tolle’s *The Power of Now*, for example, has an obvious and direct relevance to the week that deals with the “Presence”. But the connections are not always that linear: often they are more oblique and tangential, more geared towards broadening your experience of the material as a whole than supplementing the content of any one session.

Although you are free to do the course at your own pace, it is important to strike a balance between getting all the reading done before moving on – and making sure you move on before you lose momentum. If you are quick readers, you would of course be able to do all the homework before moving on; if you are not, it may be advisable to read just one of the books before moving to the next session so that you keep up a sense of continuity between sessions. It is important to read at least one of the books, though, because the learning curve is quite steep and the reading will help keep you on track.

I have scribbled some notes on each of the books listed below. These notes may make little or no sense as you look at them now – but they will mean something once you get into the material.

Although I have supplied lists of quotations from each of the texts, please use this for reference only and not as a substitute for reading the books themselves!



Session 1: Being

The Upanishads (you may want to get the Penguin Classics edition – it is the most reader friendly translation.)

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Upanisads-Penguin-Classics-Valerie-Roebuck/dp/0140447490/>

The fundamental premise here is that what “out there” (the external circumstances of your life) reflects utterly and profoundly what is “in here” (your deepest, often unconscious, preoccupations). So the “I” and the “Other,” the “Self” and the “Cosmos”, are One. Virtually everything we will study on this course will derive from this core principal. An absolute must, therefore – so please read it carefully, a little bit at a time, perhaps, so that you integrate it deeply.

Session 2: Healing

Thorwald Dethlefsen & Rudiger Dahlke MD: *The Healing Power of Illness – The Meaning of Symptoms & How to Interpret Them* -

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Healing-Power-Illness-Symptoms-Interpret/dp/186204080X/>

A path-breaking book that argues that all physical illness is symptomatic of deeply held emotional and spiritual issues which need first to be addressed if true healing is to be achieved. There is some very telling analysis of what it is to take responsibility for one’s life – especially of its “shadow” aspects.



Session 3: Power

Peter Kingsley: *In the Dark Places of Wisdom*

<http://www.peterkingsley.org/Details.cfm?ProdID=63&category=2>

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Dark-Places-Wisdom-Peter-Kingsley/dp/189035001X>

Kingsley traces the history of the recognition of the profound value of the “darker” aspects of our lives - and its suppression in the West. This is a book about those mythical heroes (and every culture has them) who have to journey into the underworld to acquire their power. The underworld is of course not so much a geographical place as a place in the psyche so the lesson is that the surest way of gaining access to the “higher” regions of fulfilment is to first plumb the depths of our own greatest fears. Kingsley’s is an academically sound - and attractively readable - antidote to the “flowers and light” naivety of the (now thankfully outmoded) “New Age”.

Session 4: Presence

Eckhart Tolle: *The Power of Now*

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Power-Now-Guide-Spiritual-Enlightenment/dp/0340733500/>

Tolle is, in my view, the most sophisticated of the current crop of spiritual teachers in the West. His is a more profound position, with none of that abject chasing after the light that dogs so much contemporary western spirituality. Don’t get beguiled with the simplicity of it – it is immense. And do get a chance to watch Tolle live – or on DVD – if you get a chance. One of the reasons I rate him so highly is that he imbues a very profound and unselfconscious sense of being able to *live* in a manner that is consistent with his teachings.



Session 5: Play

The Bhagvada Gita, translated by Juan Mascaro

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Bhagavad-Translated-Sanskrit-introduction-Classics/dp/B0016V8V80/>

The warrior Arjun, hero of the Indian epic *The Mahabharata*, is riding out to battle with the god Krishna as his charioteer. Suddenly Arjun freezes: how can he be so heartless as to slay members of his family just because they happen politically to oppose him? The *Gita* is Krishna's reply. It contains a number of extraordinarily profound and far-reaching observations on the nature of man's place in the cosmos which lead naturally into some of the most powerful lessons on how to steady and quieten the mind. The teaching most pertinent to the workshop is this: what we take to be "reality" is actually just an illusion ("*maya*"), a drama from which it is possible to detach ourselves - and thereby come into our "true Being." Counter-intuitive as this may be in our doggedly materialistic culture, the parallels with Plato (the cave analogy in *The Republic*) are a telling reminder of the place of such a view at the heart of both the Indian and the Western traditions.

Thomas Byrom, *The Heart of Awareness* (a translation of the *Ashtavakra Gita*),

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/The-Heart-Awareness-Translation-Ashtavakra/dp/1570628971/>

An extraordinary journey through the simplicity and greatness of some of the ideas this course will treat such as "detachment" and "play" (which may not make a lot of sense as you glance at this list just before doing the workshop, but will be perfectly intelligible once you begin the work). The central idea here is that the "higher" or "Divine" part of us is simply that which watches the "drama" that is life, aware that it is merely a drama (see my note on the *Bhagvada Gita* above). We don't really need to achieve this or conquer that to give meaning to our lives - for we are already fulfilled, *already* a piece of the Divine. This being the case, we can "play the game of life" with none of the pressure that comes from scrambling after this or that short-term objective. A "must-read" as much for its gentleness and lyricism as for the depth and resonance of its content.



Session 6: Guides

Satprem: *Sri Aurobindo or the Adventure of Consciousness* – Translated from the French by Michel Danino

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Sri-Aurobindo-Adventure-Consciousness-Satprem/dp/0938710044/>

Sri Aurobindo is one of the three modern Indian spiritual masters who I have included in this list - and the one with whom I have the greatest personal connection. Sri Aurobindo was the great intellectual of Indian spirituality who predicted – and looked forward to – “a new age in which our sense of our inherent divinity, having been lost through the course of history, will slowly return.” This is the process with which we are now engaged, whether we know it explicitly or not. The implication for manifestation is that, when we work from that place of inherent Divinity, “all things become possible.”

The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, Translated into English by Swami Nikhilananda

<http://www.ramakrishnavivekananda.info/index.htm>

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Gospel-Sri-Ramakrishna/dp/0911206019/>

Ramakrishna was perhaps the greatest of the modern Indian spiritual teachers. His link to *Autobiography of a Yogi*, a book that is also on this list, is that he was Yogananda’s teacher. While Yogananda (and Vivekananda, who is not featured on this course but is well worth studying) were historically important in that they first brought Yoga to the West, Ramakrishna, their teacher, was “the thing itself”. He *embodied* his teachings to a greater extent than anyone I know. This book is a verbatim account of some of his discourses, many of them delivered privately to his students. Ramakrishna’s great skill was to communicate extremely complex ideas using analogies drawn from simple, everyday events.



Session 7: The Underworld

Jeremy Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred*

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Temple-Cosmos-Ancient-Egyptian-Experience/dp/0892815558/>

This is an immense book about a time when the sense of the sacred really did imbue all things. Naydler is particularly good on the ancient Egyptian clarity about the indispensable nature of darkness. He is also good on the Void ("Nun"), which is at once "uniform darkness" and "fount of the Gods". (Again, this may seem bewildering as you glance at this list prior to doing the sessions, but it will all become clear once you get to Session 7).

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali – The Essential Yoga Texts for Spiritual Enlightenment - Translation and Introduction by Swami Vivekananda

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Yoga-Sutras-Patanjali-Swami-Satchidananda/dp/0932040381/>

Many of you will know Patanjali already. This is the "original" yoga, the philosophical basis that underlies all authentic yoga practice. In today's world, where yoga has become just another way of getting fit, it is fitting that a yoga-centred course should encourage its clients to go back to the basics, to the *spiritual* world view that is the true essence of yoga. The fundamental premise is of course that we are gods *already*, only we have contrived to forget this.



Session 8: Metamorphosis

John Perkins: *Shape Shifting – Techniques for Global and Personal Transformation*

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Shape-Shifting-Techniques-Personal-Transformation/dp/0892816635/>

This is a short and wonderfully approachable account of the mysterious art of shape-shifting, written by an economist who once worked as an advisor to the World Bank and the IMF. In other words, this is a personal and deeply felt description of a hugely whacky phenomenon filtered through the sensibility of an eminently grounded person who belongs to such a different world that he can *translate* it for us better than most.

Paramahansa Yogananda: *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Self-Realisation Fellowship, 1946.

Available to read online:

<http://www.crystalclarity.com/yogananda/>

Available to buy online from the official site of the SRF:

http://www.yogananda-srf.org/ay/Autobiography_of_a_Yogi.aspx

or from Amazon:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Autobiography-Yogi-Paramahansa-Yogananda/dp/0876120796/>

Just to give you a sense of what is possible. The most engaging aspect of this book is the sheer ease with which Yogananda inhabits his astonishingly magical world. It is all so matter of fact, so self-evidently the case that things that you or I would consider miraculous happen all the time. What makes this book so important is the combination of an utterly authentic voice with the most astonishing series of anecdotes and vignettes. If people are often held back in their manifestation work by a limited sense of what is possible, this book will blow all those crippling belief systems away!



Session 9: The Void

Dennis Genpo Merzel: *The Path of the Human Being – Zen Teachings on the Bodhisattva Way*

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Path-Human-Being-Teachings-Bodhisattva/dp/1590301730/>

This is an extraordinary book because, like the Kingsley, it talks about the descent. But whereas Kingsley analyses the journeys others have made, Genpo teaches the journey itself. In fact he goes “beyond the journey”, for he has the courage to ask, what then? It is all very well accessing the Void that is our “true” state of being. What then? This is a celebration of the ordinary, a rigorously reasoned appreciation of the imperfection that is human life. It also has the interest of providing a Zen take on the scheme of things: good counterbalance to the yogic which, I realise, forms the core of the content on this course.

Arthur Osborn: *The Mind of Ramana Maharshi And The Path Of Self-knowledge*

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Ramana-Maharshi-Path-Knowledge-Rider/dp/0712617108/>

Along with Ramkrishna, Ramana Maharishi is one of the handful of modern Indian spiritual teachers I respect most – because he *lived* what he preached. The reason I included this book is that Ramana has a lot to say about the Void state that is the subject of our ninth session. The key is to be able to absorb his ability to inhabit *all the times* the states of being to which I will introduce you. The book also has the advantage of being filtered through a western mind so it provides us with a point of view with which we can identify as we approach subject matter that may seem other-worldly and abstruse.



Session 10: Creation

Vadim Zeland: *Reality Transurfing*

Vol. 1: The Space of Variations

Vol. 2: A Rustle of Morning Stars

Vol. 3: Forward to the Past

http://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=Vadim+Zeland%3A+Reality+Transurfing

The best book on the more “traditional” approaches to manifestation – a darn sight better than the likes of Barbel Mohr and Esther Hicks, if only because it is less naïve, more thorough. Don’t get put off by the fact that it comes in three volumes: they are all quite slim and eminently approachable.

Amit Goswami: *The Visionary Window*

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Visionary-Window-Quantum-Physicists-Enlightenment/dp/083560845X/>

Zeland refers to quantum physics quite a lot – so here is the most user-friendly guide to the spiritual implications of the most bewildering and counter-intuitive subject on Planet Earth. What makes Goswami’s work special is that he makes the link between quantum physics and ancient Indian metaphysics – and the parallels are fascinating.