

# Gifts with No Giver

a love affair with truth

Poems by Nirmala

Endless Satsang Press

Visit <http://www.endless-satsang.com> for more information about Nirmala and his satsangs (gatherings for the truth), or for information about ordering printed versions of his books. Other books by Nirmala, including his latest publication, a short booklet entitled The Heart's Wisdom, can also be downloaded for free at his website.

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to Neelam  
the blue sapphire flame in my heart

your hand is always in mine  
your whispered endearments are my constant  
companion  
you have never turned your face from me  
no matter how many times I have turned from you

now I vow undying love  
I meet you in the secret places I used to hide  
from you in  
I hold you with tenderness I used to reserve for  
my pain  
I would give you my life and my breath in an  
instant

for you are my true love  
the one with no form  
the one who has never been anywhere, but right here  
in the singing of my heart

why fear this moment  
when no thoughts come  
at last I lie naked  
in the arms of experience

why fear this moment  
when no words come  
at last I find rest  
in the lap of silence

why fear this moment  
when love finds itself alone  
at last I am embraced  
by infinity itself

why fear this moment  
when judgment falls away  
at last my defenses  
fail to keep intimacy at bay

why fear this moment  
when hope is lost  
at last my foolish dreams  
are surrendered to perfection

I may think I feel love  
but it is love that feels me  
constantly testing the woven fibers  
that enclose and protect my heart  
with a searing flame  
that allows no illusion of separation

and as the insubstantial fabric of my inner fortress  
is peeled away by the persistent fire  
I desperately try to save some charred remains  
by escaping into one more dream of passion  
I may think I can find love  
but it is love that finds me

meanwhile, love becomes patient and lies in wait  
its undying embers gently glowing  
and even if I now turn and grasp after the source of  
warmth  
I end up cold and empty-handed  
I may think I can possess love  
but it is love that possesses me

and finally, I am consumed  
for love has flared into an engulfing blaze  
that takes everything  
and gives nothing in return  
I may think love destroys me  
but it is love that sets me free

the past is long gone  
from here  
there is no way back  
how could there be

the present is over too quickly  
for feeble desires  
to have any effect  
except to hide peace

the future races ahead  
forever out of reach  
of dreamy wishes  
and useless plans

and yet when I rest  
in the endless now  
every need is satisfied  
in ways never imagined

I have fallen in love with truth  
I only want to be with her  
I can not stand to be apart  
I would gladly go to the ends of the earth  
or I would never again move from this spot  
just to be sure to inhale her fragrant perfume  
with my dying breath

I have fallen in love with truth  
her every wish my command  
I simply must obey  
for she has captured my soul  
and taken complete control  
of even my innermost thoughts  
freeing me to find repose  
in her unadorned splendor

I have fallen in love with truth  
with exquisite tenderness she shows me  
the perfection in my every flaw  
no need for pretense  
for she knows everything about me  
and yet takes me in her arms  
with complete abandon  
until only she remains

sunlight burns  
shadow cools  
there is no difference

earth is still  
grass is moving  
there is no difference

wind rustles  
sky is silent  
there is no difference

spider drifts by on a silken web  
and I remain  
there is no difference

where is absence of desire  
once I dreamed there would only be bliss  
now I am in awe of the ordinary  
now I am content with longing or no longing  
desires do not disturb the source of all desire  
life and death carry on as they always have  
and always will

only the dreamer is gone

behind the flow of imagination  
beyond any effort to be still  
dancing in the ebb and flow of attention  
more present than the breath  
I find the origins of my illusions

only the dreamer is gone  
the dream never ends

river of voices  
eternal mantra of foam  
meaningless words swallowed in a humming roar  
thoughts arise and are splashed away

river of music  
sacred song of motion  
nowhere to go but downstream  
actions arise and are swept away

river of sounds  
laughing and crying  
impossible to bring the depths to the surface  
emotions arise and are washed away

river of silence  
flowing through everything  
peace beyond even the absence of sound  
nothing ever arises

I don't know what to say  
I never know what to say  
yet there is great power in not knowing  
knowing I can never know  
the mystery constantly deepens  
overwhelming my sense of what is  
the mystery speaks without words  
taking the breath away  
leaving no air for words  
in silence there is room for pain and bliss  
in unlimited measure

love is a dream  
that does not stop  
when you awaken  
but constantly surprises  
no strong emotions  
stirring up dust  
and clouding your vision

love is more than it seems  
and has a purpose  
you cannot see  
and yet  
cannot hide from

love is an inescapable reality  
that knocks you  
senseless  
takes your breath away  
and leaves no heart beating  
but its own

nobody is my lover  
    I searched for her for lifetimes  
    and finally noticed  
    she was always at my side  
nothing is my heart's true desire  
    but something  
    used to always get in the way  
now emptiness fills me to overflowing  
as I fall into my lover's embrace  
    I can love you or ...  
    I can love love itself  
    and thus love you truly  
    letting illusion rest at last  
has freedom spoiled me for any other lover  
or is there room for the one in the infinite  
questions fall away in the embrace of my true love  
    join me in her arms  
    and rest at last  
I am carried  
like a mother holding her infant child  
tender, yet firm  
    I am provided for  
    with caring attention  
    that anticipates every need  
and yet  
I am swallowed whole by this love

no longer my hand that moves  
no longer my voice that muses  
no longer my eyes that fill with tears  
at the simple beauty of a hazy afternoon

who could contain this rapture  
who keeps this heart beating  
who could keep this heart from breaking  
at the loss of everything it foolishly held dear

questions have lost their fascination  
longing has surrendered to fullness  
gratitude is enough  
even with the loss of everything  
foolishly held dear

endless traces of memory  
fill in empty moments  
stealing my peace  
and robbing my happiness  
they can not take the real treasure  
beyond peace and happiness

behind every memory  
is simple awareness  
of this ordinary moment  
a body breathing  
a mind making comparisons  
and yet something more  
is always present

this simple moment  
a body still breathing  
mind still chasing dreams  
what is the something more  
that fills the ordinary with magic?  
the full recognition  
of what was always longed for  
in the heart

through emptiness  
peace is born  
no painful labor required  
an easy birth  
an easy life  
an easy death  
the peace flows from the depths  
the heart can only be broken  
when the object of love is gone  
but true love has no object  
    through emptiness  
    awareness is born  
    it grows untended  
    filling the emptiness with eyes  
    and ears and noses  
    and more hearts  
    to be broken and mended  
    broken and mended  
    until they can no longer  
    be broken  
    only mended  
through awareness  
birth is ended  
what never ends needs no beginning  
love is too large  
for a heart to hold  
yet the opened heart  
rests in this largeness  
until fear is also ended  
knowing the heart  
has always been  
unbroken

no poem  
no song  
no ritual  
captures the simple beingness of a stone  
    let alone a mountain of stone

but let the stone write the poem  
let the mountain sing in your heart  
let the rituals fall like gentle rain to nourish the gods  
inside every stone  
    and every mountain  
let your soul rise above the mountain  
    above the rain  
    above the clouds  
the journey home requires no effort  
only willingness to release your claw like grip  
    on the familiar ground

then the stone speaks unspeakable truth  
then the mountain fills your heart with a silent song  
of peace  
and rituals sprout wings of surrender in your soul  
    and you arrive  
        here

like a green desert  
life has burst forth  
in this empty container  
spilling over  
and moistening the parched soil

no need to store the bounty  
the supply is endless  
the source is at hand  
the fruits of no labor  
within easy reach

feast on this  
feed the deepest longing  
drink until thirst is a distant memory  
desire itself is consumed  
when the heart finds nourishment

your smile  
morning sun on new fallen snow  
melting the icy chill  
unveiling a blue sapphire flame in my heart  
burning memory into ash  
revealing bliss

your eyes  
dark liquid pools of grace  
causing a whirlpool of emotion  
carrying me to the depths  
drowning me in joy

your touch  
gentlest breeze  
passing through skin and flesh and bone  
healing so complete  
leaving no scars  
where once were deep wounds

your form  
graceful flight in empty sky  
giving me birth  
naming me  
ruling me forever  
yet your only command: setting me free

your voice  
birdsong and distant thunder  
inspiring quiet so vast  
thinking no longer finds refuge

your love  
a rain swollen river  
overflowing its banks  
washing away all cherished possessions  
leaving an empty cup  
full of peace

I never knew tears could feel so good  
until I opened my heart  
and found they come from the same source  
as boundless laughter

instead of blurring my vision  
they bring beauty into focus

instead of burning my cheeks  
they wash away dusty dryness I used to hide  
behind

let sorrow have me now  
for surrender has freed me to savor  
the bittersweet nectar  
that flows in measureless abundance  
from within

I bathe in holy water  
wash myself clean in the sacred river  
nothing has changed  
yet senses are now clear  
and I hear what she is saying to my heart:

give me your foolish thoughts...  
you don' t need them anymore  
give me your every desire...  
they will never fulfill you  
give me your deepest fears...  
what use have they ever been to you  
give me your very soul...  
you have always been too large  
for its tight confines

so once again I plunge into Ganga' s embrace.

once for my thoughts  
once more for my desires  
and a third time for my fears

she has always had my soul

and once again, nothing has changed....  
nothing always changes

no deep rooted fears  
fear exists on the surface  
fear is the surface  
dive deeper and fear is swallowed  
in the depth of knowing

nothing to fear in this moment  
even when a gun is held to your head  
the thing most feared has not yet happened  
once an event has occurred  
fear is too late

fear has no home here  
where all is as it is  
Breathe the tranquil air  
and discover the fragrant serenity

thoughts dance their enticing moves  
before my entranced inner sight  
but the spell is broken  
when I wonder  
who is entranced

memories beckon seductively  
with all the luster they can manage  
yet their shine is swallowed  
in the light  
behind my eyes

there is one dancer  
I cannot resist  
her only movement is utter stillness  
I find no memory  
in her transparent gaze

romance is a simple mistake  
finding true love  
in the arms of one other  
is like capturing a waterfall  
in a tiny cup  
thirst is slightly quenched  
why not just step into the source

romance is a beautiful distraction  
taking you beyond your dry concerns  
yet what good is an open heart  
with room for only one  
when that one is gone  
the heart is empty and dry  
and tears fall on empty ground

romance is a single drop  
in a torrent of love  
why settle for one sip at a time  
the sweetest tasting water is deeper than the surface  
dive into the current  
and as you are swept away  
drink to your heart' s content

nothing seen is wasted  
the sight of every eye  
increases the range of vision  
of that which sees

    every sight is a gem  
    of pure perfection  
    in the inner eyes  
    of that which sees

each viewpoint  
lives on forever  
nothing can die  
within that which sees

    look deeply into any eye  
    beyond your reflection  
    come face to face  
    with that which sees

abandon appearance  
let go of pretense  
you are naked and exposed  
before that which sees

    do not turn away your gaze  
    no need to hide  
    only love shines in the eyes  
    of that which sees

all may have a mind of their own  
but thoughts are gifts of grace  
touching mind for an instant  
like melting snowflakes

every place can be home  
but rest is a divine blessing  
when effort falls away  
like the setting sun

the heart may burn with emptiness  
but love comes in waves  
smoothing away doubts  
like a tide erasing footprints in the sand

in the dream  
I always play the fool  
in the dream  
my defenses always fail  
in the dream  
my desires are never fully satisfied  
in the dream  
my heart is broken over and over

wide awake  
I always play the fool  
wide awake  
my defenses always fail  
wide awake  
my desires are never fully satisfied  
wide awake  
my heart sings its endless joy

what should we do  
what is the purpose of life  
here is the endless task  
to do nothing well  
here is your purpose  
to be free of any purpose

why do we suffer so  
how can we end the pain  
here is the source of suffering  
in the desire to end suffering  
there is no end to pain  
nor an end to joy  
within the soul of freedom

my longing was never deep enough  
to touch this empty well  
    my effort was never great enough  
    to move this unmovable mountain  
my understanding was never broad enough  
to contain this silent truth  
    my dreaming was never real enough  
    to shape this formless presence  
        nothing is always enough  
        when nothing is needed

the mystery  
of this simple moment  
can not be spoken  
yet all of history  
occurred to arrive here

the mystery  
of the endless terrain of self  
can not be mapped out  
countless new frontiers  
are born with every breath

the mystery  
of awakening  
can not be achieved  
all that is needed  
is to notice inner eyes that never close  
the mystery  
of sweet undying love  
can not be understood  
the heart already knows  
what the mind can only long for

the mysteries  
always remain  
untouched by worried thought  
ready to welcome us home  
when we abandon our dreams

take my hand  
feel the vital grip  
that love lends to this flesh  
    listen to my voice  
    hear the catch in my throat  
    of awe that can' t bexpressed  
gaze into my eyes  
see tears welling up  
as I recognize my long lost self in your smile  
    rest in my arms  
    find refuge in my embrace  
    until you know you are forever safe  
join me now  
here  
where we have never parted

no word is real enough  
to conjure up a crumb of bread  
still we try to find nourishment  
in endless musing

no thought is thick enough  
to cushion a fall  
yet we pursue idle distractions  
while tripping on obstacles in our path

there is a silent voice behind the words  
there is a quiet source of every thought  
listen without your ears  
ponder without your mind  
    rest your senses and your sense  
    for just one moment of this stillness  
    will sustain and uphold you forever

it is here  
in the breath  
it is here  
in the stillness between breaths  
    it is here  
    in the active mind  
    it is here  
    in the resting mind  
it is here  
in the dream' s panorama  
it is here  
in each moment of awakening  
    it is here  
    when all is well  
    it is here  
    when fear has nothing left to fear  
even then  
there is pure noticing  
even then  
there is no need for doing  
    no frantic searching  
    can find the obvious  
    no seeking needed  
    to find that which seeks  
it is here  
where it can never be lost  
or found

where does willingness come from  
willing to do anything  
    although nothing can be done  
willing to surrender everything  
    although nothing is mine  
willing to be exposed  
    although there is nothing to hide

where does lovingness come from  
loving the flaws in us  
    although we are perfect  
loving the simplicity  
    although feelings are so complex  
loving you  
    although no one is there

where does gratefulness come from  
grateful for the laughter  
    although the joke is on me  
grateful for the beauty  
    although eyes cannot truly see  
grateful for the bounty  
    although hands are forever empty

truth is a living being  
that must be nourished and fed  
and loved  
then it grows and blossoms  
filling the air with pure aroma  
making us gasp with delight

truth is a friend  
that asks for loyalty  
and acceptance  
then it enters our hearts  
dissolving the boundaries  
freeing us from loneliness

truth is a demanding lover  
that requires constant affection  
and endless gifts  
then it rewards us  
with a glimpse of indescribable beauty  
making us faint with satisfaction

and finally truth is an empty hand  
that asks for and requires  
nothing

the obvious signs  
a playful smile  
absence of pretense  
disregard for convention  
respect for truth  
    listen when they speak  
    look where they point  
    follow where they lead  
abandon hope and faith and dreams  
accept nothing less than all they have to give  
    your share in the infinite is infinite  
    come claim your birthright  
return to the place never left  
return and let the seeker rest  
    subside in the unending peace  
let the seeker rest  
    let that which you seek find you  
let the seeker rest  
    the task is finished  
        let the seeker rest  
            let the seeker rest

behind closed eyes  
the world falls away  
a whirl of empty sensation  
with no boundary  
drowning thought  
in a silent symphony  
burning the body  
in painless effigy  
when eyes open again  
the world is cleansed  
only perfection remains  
the room is resplendent  
with the absence of illusion

grateful  
for grace  
that fills mind with visions  
of the invisible

grateful  
for time  
that expands to embrace  
stillness

grateful  
for breath  
that seems to require  
no breather

grateful  
for gratitude  
that breaks the soul wide open  
freeing love

in a timeless instant  
before a painful idea appears in my mind  
an ever present softness, a gentle hand  
reaches into my thoughts  
and soothes them  
until they reflect only empty sky  
    in a timeless moment  
    before a desire burns in my heart  
    an inexhaustible peace, a whispered silence  
    quells the storm  
    of fruitless wishing  
    leaving me breathlessly still  
in a timeless lifetime  
before my story is wrenched from silence  
a wordless honesty, an unflinching gaze  
shows me my face  
without shadows of doubt  
dimming the fire within  
    in a timeless eternity  
    before my soul is torn from infinity  
    a passionate tenderness, an enfolding embrace  
    leaves me alone  
    with the source of sweetness  
    even closer than a kiss

welcome home  
welcome to the home never left  
you have always lived here  
will always live here  
    this is home, forever...  
so stop now  
no effort is required  
even during all journeys  
you have always been here  
    this is home, forever...  
so relax now  
the fire is in the hearth  
this inner fire is keeping you warm  
the storms outside cannot touch you  
    this is home, forever...  
so rest now  
everyone loved is right here  
we have always lived here  
will always live here  
    this is home, forever...

I must follow this thought  
all the way  
let the mind have its way with me  
but only with me  
not with the quiet presence  
the voice behind all thoughts

I must feel this emotion  
with my whole being  
and as it sweeps me off my feet  
enjoy the sensation of falling  
falling endlessly into the arms  
of no lover

I must, I must  
for this dream demands no less  
than total suspension of disbelief  
total surrender  
for the dream and the dreamer  
are one and the same

I have never been more than a dream  
and the dreamer  
is awake

endless poems wait to be written  
while all has been said before  
this truth can not be spoken  
and so I try again  
just to get a little closer  
to the unspeakable reality

forever gently teasing just out of reach  
forever invisible at the edge of perception  
forever tranquil in the maelstrom of feelings  
forever present in this moment's eternity

it doesn't matter  
what I do  
mind judges  
then judges itself for judging  
that's just what minds do  
when I let it have its way  
it surprises me by stopping  
and in the vacant interlude  
the mind finds no grip  
and falls effortlessly  
into the deep pool of silence  
it never left

rain falls  
within the endless awareness  
the sun still shines  
behind the clouds

loss rips  
at the heart of love  
empty peace still rests  
at the source of tears

floods wash  
away the precious hillsides  
life rises to the surface  
for another breath of joy

thoughts race  
across the mind's attention  
quiet still sings  
from the throat of nowhere

pure freedom remains  
when all else is  
    swallowed in the river of time

mind always wins  
every thought an artful trap  
leading further into dreams  
resistance speeds the entanglement  
surrender, the only option

then what surprising silence  
entanglement becomes a tender caress  
dreaming dissolves in wonder

mind continues the endless game  
jumping in to claim peace as its own  
creating a new identity to play with  
as if it could find something solid in empty space  
laughter, the only response

then identities come and go  
mind plays on the surface  
silence enjoys it all

all I have ever wanted is wanting  
all I have ever had is having  
all I am is all there is  
and wanting and having are always here  
in equal measure

all I have ever loved is love  
all I have ever loved is loving  
all I am is love  
and loving is always here  
in infinite measure

quite ordinary desires  
come and go  
come and go  
never needing to be fulfilled  
their satisfaction made irrelevant  
by the shining beauty  
    of a rain soaked forest  
the rain washing away thoughts  
    of something lacking

what could be lacking  
in this explosion of life  
that grows in each nook and cranny  
    of the infinite heart  
the moisture of love  
seeping down to nourish the roots  
    of every being  
or dancing in streams and rivers  
    all the way home

die a little  
with every disappointment  
or find what never dies  
and has no preferences

try a little  
and keep illusion going  
or see the futility of effort  
and stop pushing on nothing

be happy a little  
now and then when circumstance allows  
or rest in the source of happiness  
now, then and always

believe a little  
that you are someone  
or notice there is no separate one  
nor any limit to being

love a little  
with half a heart  
or let love have it all  
filling the heart to overflowing

the dance of emptiness  
goes on and on  
colors, shapes and forms  
arrayed in courtly splendor  
on the dance floor of infinity

the patterns of the dance  
will hypnotize if watched too closely  
while the entire view  
ends all trances  
and frees the dreaming mind

now join the dance  
its irresistible ebb and flow  
swallows your pride  
in the pure joy  
of moving stillness

this voice is inadequate  
to express the abundant wonder  
of this endless moment

this body is insufficient  
to embrace the sweet infinity  
of this lover's bodiless form

these eyes are unable  
to capture the invisible beauty  
of a cloudless sky

and yet I sing with joy,  
caress the air with tenderness,  
allow beauty to fill my eyes with tears,  
and know that the love in my heart  
is always enough

truth is too simple for words  
before thought gets tangled up in nouns and  
verbs  
there is a wordless sound  
a deep breathless sigh  
of overwhelming relief  
to find the end of fiction  
in this ordinary  
yet extraordinary moment  
when words are recognized  
as words  
and truth is recognized  
as everything else

a quiet room  
empty of profound thoughts  
in this moment  
no need to uncover deep truths

the chairs do not mind the silence  
the rug is not burdened by the lack of  
weighty ideas  
only the thought, "there must be something more"  
cries out in pretended anguish

the chairs pay no attention  
the rug only lies more quietly  
until the pretended suffering  
can't help but notice  
there is always more  
that does not need to be revealed

laughter stops thought  
and fills the space behind the eyes with light  
such simple delight  
to find nothing is knowable

I can only give everything  
to this nothing  
and am overjoyed  
to let it tear down the barricade in my chest  
and steal my heart

the room is empty  
except for these saddened eyes  
that find refuge in emptiness

friends come and go  
lovers come and go  
but love itself never wavers

emptiness is my refuge  
emptiness is my resting place  
everywhere I turn, the end of boundaries awaits

take sadness now  
take happiness also  
leave only clear vision

the room is still empty  
except for these opened eyes  
that find refuge in fullness

early in the morning  
asleep in a dream  
only to awaken in another dream  
why disturb the quiet mist  
with imaginary forms  
the heart is never fulfilled  
with dream lovers

for there is never enough  
of what does not satisfy

so let the mist have it all  
I have moistened my cheeks long enough in this fog  
of dreaming  
I will not move again until my true love appears

when at last the sun burns away the haze  
no one is there  
what relief. . . to find her waiting

mind finds a path  
to struggle along  
never reaching the goal  
heart knows it already rests  
in the path of something wonderful  
it can not escape

mind seeks to hold onto  
a still point  
of final understanding  
heart knows it is being held  
by an unmoving whirlwind  
that it will never comprehend

mind tries to feel safe enough  
to allow love  
out into the open  
heart knows love is never cautious  
and can not be kept secret  
once all hope of refuge is abandoned

simply resting  
from a full day of resting  
feeling too rested  
to even consider anything more

simply quiet  
staying in the silent pauses  
no thought  
not even the idea: no thought

too busy  
doing nothing  
to stop long enough  
to do something less

excitement stirs the blood  
yet only nothingness is ever palpable  
imagined pleasures always fall short  
    compared to the simple reality  
        this bird in the hand  
            is worth a million in the bush  
sensations have their say  
promising satisfaction, as if they could stay  
    long enough to fulfill endless desire  
        yet always ending in a reverberating  
            empty stillness  
this deafening calm  
is cherished by the core of being  
as the true source of infinity

light through a prism...  
a rainbow  
love through my heart...  
the spectrum of feelings revealed  
red anger to blue sadness  
yellow fear to black despair  
allow them back into my heart  
and the prism works in reverse  
turning the most deeply tinted pain  
back into pure white love

foolish to chase after imaginary pleasures  
they love to dance out of reach  
giving only tastes of slight satisfaction

simpler to give heartfelt attention  
to the source of contentment  
and find there is never anything missing  
in this moment

then the rising water of devotion  
takes the weight out of these hands  
and dissolves the dreamlike boundaries  
of desire itself

a world of endless contradiction  
sad smiles and joyous tears  
the heart is torn in two  
by feelings that never fail to pull in opposite  
directions  
torn in two  
by dreams that forever dance out of reach

until at last the contents of the heart  
spill out in an endless flood  
of sad smiles and joyous tears  
that no longer have any ambivalence  
because of their shared source

words do not come  
there is no need for profound utterances or  
    deep truths  
here is an ordinary evening  
why spoil it with dramatic overstatement

the silence amidst the noise  
the gem at the core  
    of every experience  
is polished by simple attention  
into shining magnificence

every taste  
every sensation  
every possible pleasure  
is already present  
in the timeless  
awareness  
that is beating my heart  
what use  
in chasing dreams  
that have already  
come true

who would have guessed  
this empty feeling in my chest  
is the door to eternity

who could have known  
this longing  
is what I longed for

how is it possible  
thoughts of freedom  
only hide freedom

why don't I care  
about answers  
when questions never end

who would have guessed  
this empty feeling in my chest  
could be so full

what kind of fire  
has no preference for fuel  
gladly burning thoughts, feelings,  
bodies and souls  
yet it is a cool flame  
leaving the core untouched

it flares whenever I give it attention  
or has it always been burning this brightly

sleep comes in the afternoon  
and then wakefulness never truly returns  
drinking in rest like cool water  
cold outside does not touch it  
yawning does not disturb it  
thoughts of friends in pain  
    can only make it more obvious  
here in this quiet house  
the totality comes out to play

hot sun fills the eyes to overflowing  
while a cooling breeze of freedom lifts sweat from the  
brow  
every experience from the past that visits now  
is recognized for what it has always been  
pure food for the dreaming oneness  
the banquet continues with each breath

I feast now even on heartbreak and loss  
as they burst the limits I held so dear  
freeing me from resisting appetite  
for fear of a taste of sour fruit

I also welcome the sweet dessert  
of quiet moments  
truth with no trimmings  
a simple meal of limitless portion  
every tender morsel of silence  
more filling than the last

desire  
pure unadulterated longing  
tears at the chest with such force  
it seems the soul might leave  
    just to find relief

sadness  
bittersweet taste of emptiness  
weighs on the shoulders  
like a burden  
    too heavy to bear

surrender  
swallowing all pride  
collapsing from all effort  
only to find rest again  
    in the depths of pain itself

why was I running from this profound  
    silent joy

sweeter than any kiss  
the taste of eternity  
lingers on my lips  
tasting me

only the slightest pause  
before her passion  
overwhelms my feigned resistance  
and takes everything I have to give

if this lover breaks my heart  
there will be no pieces left

gratitude burns in the chest  
glad tears run down the cheeks  
strange illusion fills the eyes  
the hum of life thrills the ears  
    no more sense of mine to senses  
    the body no longer belongs to anyone  
    leaving no one in the way  
    of all a body can contain  
    and all a body can not touch

wonder awes the mind  
inspiration raises the spirit  
silence soothes the doubts  
intuition speaks to the soul  
    no more idea of someone with ideas  
    knowing needs no knower  
    freeing truth to expand  
    into all mind can contain  
    and all mind can not even imagine

when I am held in your arms  
even pain is pure bliss  
dark thoughts of separation and lack  
are waves of pure pleasure  
unfulfilled desire is complete ecstasy

thank you  
for never having let go

the truth catches up with me  
I am not enough  
never have been  
never will be  
what relief to admit this finite container  
can never contain infinity  
what joy to find infinity  
needs no container

the tears flow freely now  
the mind quiets and the heart breaks wide open  
all the hopes and dreams of a lifetime, many lifetimes  
gently washed away

longings that have burned in the mind for ages  
suddenly flare up, but are quenched  
the dying embers of illusion  
gently washed away

and the soul thus unburdened of pretense  
can barely stand to open its watery eyes  
sights so intense, and yet so unreal  
gently washed away

finally, a voice that speaks the simplest of truth  
intermingled with sweet blissful sighs  
all the remaining fears and excitements  
gently laughed away

the tired wanderer  
loses the strength to go on  
and in surrendering to hopelessness  
is surprised  
to finally feel at home

the hurried creek  
pauses in a cold, stony pool  
and in sudden stillness  
arrives  
at the distant ocean

the frightened warrior  
decides, "I am ready to die"  
and in willing abandon  
becomes  
immortal

the fitful breeze  
fades to calm in the afternoon heat  
and in catching its breath  
is reborn  
as undying tradewinds

the troubled philosopher  
finds nothing to believe in  
and in unexpected silence  
just smiles  
at the still unanswered questions

the restless sea  
becomes smooth and mirrors the clouds  
and in ceasing all motion  
rejoins  
its own depths

the saddened lover  
faces the loss of illusion once again  
and in dying to passion  
falls in love  
with love itself

the weary sun  
sinks into the embrace of the horizon  
and in resting at last  
welcomes other shores  
to a new day

memories of true love  
are useless in filling empty moments  
for this lover never shows the same face  
always a new disguise  
keeping mind in suspense  
and senses alert

surrender to perpetual surprise  
and find her waiting once again  
in emptiness itself

body is pure doing  
    beyond doing there is mind  
mind is pure knowing  
    beyond knowing there is heart  
    heart is pure being

mind is more than the brain  
    the heart of being is infinitely more  
    than this physical beating in the chest  
all resides in this heart  
the pulse of all life depends on its endless  
rhythm  
lifting us in moments of simple awareness  
beyond the limits of doing and knowing  
directly to the source  
of our most tender feelings  
    and beyond even limitless love  
    where all is merged  
    in silent wonder

the passion for freedom  
swallows the source of passion  
if twoness could lead to oneness  
we would all be faithful lovers

no reason to dream of love  
for it is already here in the waking heart  
find it now  
in the sweet infinity  
of this moment's  
eternal embrace

the flower can only wait  
for the bee to arrive  
yet passion appears from nowhere  
to play hide and seek with peace  
all that is gained is lost once again

timeless dreams are swallowed  
in the yawn of an awakened sleeper  
yet spring rises like a phoenix  
from the ashes of winter  
all that is lost was never real

is the heart big enough  
for the source of weeping  
is the heart big enough  
for this pure delight

mind plays its oldest trick  
sighing woe is me  
so lonely  
so lonely....being someone

what's this  
a sweetness  
in the embrace of loneliness  
what deeper longing is being satisfied

I always thought you would come to me  
in the shape of a beautiful lover  
I never dreamed you would steal my heart  
with no shape at all

I always pretended I needed arms to hold me  
and lips to kiss away my pain  
yet I find fulfillment  
in the embrace of empty space

I always wished you would speak to me  
with words of tender sweetness  
now I know you whisper silently  
of your undying love

I always knew I would find you  
although I foolishly looked with my eyes  
you were here all along  
hiding just out of sight in my heart

a lasting marriage  
when devotion has claimed you for its own  
no longer any chance to stray  
a brief fling with illusion no longer satisfies  
the truth demands utter fidelity  
with no possibility of divorce

all pain must be faced  
and embraced as the true countenance of  
your beloved

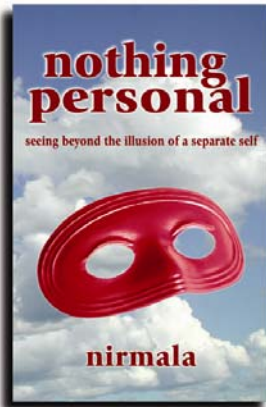
all fear must be met  
and recognized as the thrill of tasting  
the unknowable

all joy must be surrendered  
and acknowledged as a gift with  
no giver

this union only requires telling the truth  
even when the truth shatters your dreams  
even when the truth leaves you emptied out  
even when the truth reveals your counterfeit  
existence  
then there is no other possibility  
than happily ever after

fire may burn the wood  
the ashes do not mind

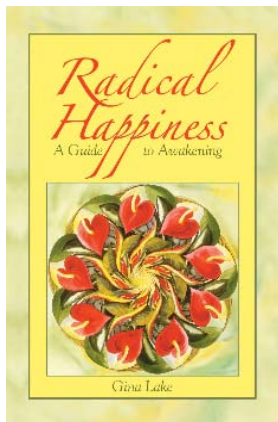
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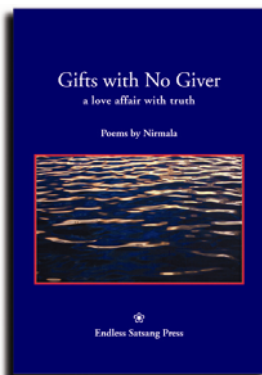
—From the Foreword by Adyashanti

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For more info or to order, visit [www.radicalhappiness.com](http://www.radicalhappiness.com)



***Gifts with No Giver*** by Nirmala, non-dual poetry.

truth is too simple for words  
before thought gets tangled up in nouns and verbs  
there is a wordless sound  
a deep breathless sigh  
of overwhelming relief  
to find the end of fiction  
in this ordinary  
yet extraordinary moment  
when words are recognized  
as words  
and truth is recognized  
as everything else

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The following PDF e-books are available for free from [www.endless-satsang.com](http://www.endless-satsang.com):

### ***From the Heart: Dropping out of Your Mind and Into Your Being***

Nirmala's newest e-book offers simple ways to shift into a more open and allowing perspective and to experience your true nature as aware space. Here is an excerpt from the Introduction:

"You may think it matters what happens. But what if the only thing that matters is where you are experiencing from, where you are looking from? What if you could experience all of life from a spacious, open perspective where anything can happen and there is room for all of it, where there is no need to pick and choose, to put up barriers or resist any of it, where nothing is a problem and everything just adds to the richness of life? What if this open, spacious perspective was the most natural and easy thing to do?

It may sound too good to be true, but we all have a natural capacity to experience life in this way. The only requirement is to look from the Heart instead of from the eyes and the head—and not just to look, but to listen and feel and sense from the Heart.

In some spiritual traditions you are encouraged to look in your Heart, and yet what does that mean exactly? Often we are so used to looking and sensing through the head and the mind that when we are asked to look in the Heart, we look *through* the head into the Heart to see what is there. Usually we end up just thinking about the Heart. But what if you could drop into the Heart and look from there? How would your life look right now? Is it possible that there is another world right in front of you that you can only see with the Heart and not with the mind?

This book invites you to explore this radically different perspective and to find out what is true and real when the world and your life are viewed from the Heart of Being. It may both delight and shock you to find that so much richness and wonder and beauty lie so close and are so immediately available to you."

### ***The Heart's Wisdom***

In this short booklet, Nirmala points the reader back to the Heart, the truest source of wisdom. Here are some excerpts:

"The Heart is wise and accurate and can show you how true it is to stay or go, how true it is to buy a house, how true it is to take a new job, even how true it is to eat another cookie. But it also can show you much more of the possibilities inherent in this life and much more of the truth of your ultimate Being. In relation to these bigger truths, the practical questions of your life turn out to be relatively small matters. Using your Heart only to know things like what to do or where to live is like using a global positioning satellite system to find the way from your bedroom to your bathroom; it utilizes only a small part of your Heart's capacity.

However, following your Heart day in and day out can put you in touch with the richness of the functioning of this dimension of your Being. Along the way, you may also find your Heart opening in response to the deeper movements of Being that touch every life."

"In the midst of a very profound and large experience of truth, the sense of your self can become so large and inclusive that it no longer has much of a sense of being your Being. When you awaken to the oneness of all things, the sense of a me can thin out quite dramatically. If you are the couch you are sitting on and the clouds in the sky and everything else, then it simply doesn't make sense to call it all me. If it's so much more than what you usually take yourself to be, then the term me is just too small.

In a profound experience of truth, the sense of me softens and expands to such a degree that there's only a slight sense of me as a separate self remaining, perhaps just as the observer of the vastness of truth. Beyond these profound experiences of the truth, is the truth itself. When you're in touch with the ultimate truth and the most complete sense of Being, there's nothing separate remaining to sense itself there's no experience and no experiencer, no Heart, and no sense of self. There is only Being."

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### ***Living Life as a Question***

This is a compilation of talks given in satsang by Nirmala from 2002-2004 throughout North America. They have been edited and arranged to read in sequence. Satsang is a Sanskrit word meaning “gathering for the Truth.” This truth does not refer to any particular dogma but rather to the truth of who you are, the truth of your Being. Here is an excerpt:

“We’ve been so conditioned to think the point of questions is to get answers that we overlook that the point of answers is that they get us to more questions. The questions are as valid and rich as any answer because every answer is full of questions. You can even begin to enjoy the questions, even trust the questions, as much as any answer that comes.

When you value the questions themselves, you just naturally hold the answers more lightly because they aren’t the goal. If the question is just as rich as the answer, then it’s fine if the answer comes and goes. Have you ever noticed that you’ve forgotten everything you once understood? Every insight you’ve ever had has faded, and that’s great because then you’re back in the question. You’re back in this really alive place where you’re getting to find out what you know now, what’s happening now, what’s moving, what’s changing, what it’s like now. What is it like now? You’ll never be done with that question. What’s happening now? You could say that answers are just a temporary side effect of having questions.

This is a gentler, more respectful way of being with your experience. It’s a more intimate way of being with your experience every moment to ask what it’s like instead of How can I fix it? How can I get more? How can I get less? How can I improve it? How can I change it? How can I avoid it? How can I hang onto it? Do you see how all of these questions have an effort to them? They have a sense of violence to them, a sense of being in battle with or in opposition to your life. It’s hard to be intimate with someone when you’re pushing them out the door or trying to keep them from leaving. There’s no intimacy in that kind of interaction. How much possibility is there for real, deep contact? The same thing is true for other dimensions of our Being. The opportunity is to intimately experience the expansions and contractions, the openings and the closings, the freedom and the stuckness, the wonder and the confusion, the understanding and the lack of understanding.”

### ***Gifts With No Giver***

A collection of poems by Nirmala. Here is a sample poem:

*every taste  
every sensation  
every possible pleasure  
is already present  
in the timeless  
awareness  
that is beating my heart  
what use  
in chasing dreams  
that have already  
come true*

Free E-books by Nirmala available from [www.endless-satsang.com](http://www.endless-satsang.com): (continued)

### ***Nothing Personal, Seeing Beyond the Illusion of a Separate Self***

*Nothing Personal: Seeing Beyond the Illusion of a Separate Self.* In this concisely edited collection of satsang talks and dialogues, Nirmala “welcomes whatever arises within the field of experience. In the midst of this welcoming is always an invitation to inquire deeply within, to the core of who and what you are. Again and again, Nirmala points the questions back to the questioner and beyond to the very source of existence itself—to the faceless awareness that holds both the question and the questioner in a timeless embrace.” –From the Foreword by Adyashanti.

Testimonials about *Nothing Personal*:

“*Nothing Personal: Seeing Beyond the Illusion of a Separate Self* is an excellent book, very clear and warm-hearted. I love it and recommend it highly. Nirmala is a genuine and authentic teacher, who points with great clarity to the simplicity and wonder of non-dual presence. He invites you to ‘say yes to the mystery of every moment.’ Good stuff!”

–Joan Tollifson, Advaita teacher and author of *Awake in the Heartland*

“Nirmala offers a variety of subtle spiritual practices for inquiring and seeing the truth about you in every moment and, most importantly, accepting it. First, you find the truth through inquiry; then you stay with it until you rest in it; then you fall deeply in love with it....Another beauty of this collection is that Nirmala does not attempt to reject anything that arises in consciousness by hiding out in the Absolute. As he says, accepting the whole truth means that nothing matters and everything matters: ‘The goal of spiritual life is not to transcend the world or be done with it but to bring the Absolute to the suffering of the world.’...Besides wisdom, you will find honesty and humor in these talks....This book points to that which we truly are - the already present and permanent source of joy and happiness, the Heart of Being.”

–Dennis L. Trunk, Third Millennium Gateway

“As with most modern books on Advaita, this is a psychological rather than a metaphysical presentation, but it is full of sincere love, wisdom and humour. It is highly practical and readable with many original ways of looking at the situation in which the seeker finds him/herself. I highly recommend this book. A wonderful gift to the Advaita community.” –Dennis Waite, author *The Book of One*.

Excerpt from *Nothing Personal*:

“What if even your strongest emotions aren’t personal? Is anything personal? What if this experience we are having as a body and mind is more like a radio that receives things rather than creates or generates them? You need a radio to play the songs that are passing through this room now, right? All this experience is floating around, and this radio called “you” is playing these songs called desire, fear, love, envy. Even resistance is just one more song called “I want to turn off the radio.” What if your internal experiences are not personal but more like something a musician recorded years ago and being played now?

Even the love songs aren’t personal. Even the very dramatic, very sad, very happy, or very romantic ones aren’t personal. There is nothing wrong with them; they just aren’t yours. You can still pay attention to them, but there is no reason to get invested in trying to change them or get them to stay around. Every song on the radio eventually ends—even “Bye-Bye Miss American Pie,” which was 17 minutes long. It would go on and on, but eventually there would be another commercial.

A radio is a great metaphor because a radio isn’t like a CD player, which you can program to play what you want it to play. What plays on the radio is not up to you. Sometimes, it is a happy song, sometimes it is a sad one, sometimes it is an inspiring one. The Mystery is so wise that it knows exactly what song to put on in this moment. It decides what song gets played, and once it has been played, you can’t hang on to it. Just being present while it is being played is the best you can do. That is all you *can* do. Paradoxically, this recognition that everything that arises on this radio called “you” is impersonal makes it easier to pay attention to what is arising because, if it’s not personal, there is no reason to hold back from it.”