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# Then Enters Spirit: Nafisa Sharriff



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BY YMIB

# Sharriff



Twenty years ago [Nafisa Sharriff](#), Meditation Master, Interfaith Minister and teacher of Spiritual Tools for Transformation encountered the teachings of the Brotherhood of Light. These channeled (the allowing of Holy Spirit to speak through the physical body) teachings unleashed a longing within her heart, causing her to embark upon an intense course of spiritual study, Self-discovery and total transformation. Her journey led her to the temples of ancient Egypt (Khemet), a six week intense course of study in the gurukula (school of the guru) at the Gurudev Siddha Peeth Ashram in Ganeshpuri, India and the One Spirit Interfaith Seminary in New York City, where she was recently ordained as and Interfaith Minister. Integrating the unique blend of her spiritual experiences, Nafisa founded <http://www.ethoh.org> Entering the Holy of

Holies, An Institute of Learning and Healing, Inc, which is based in New York City. In addition to being the founder and CEO, Nafisa facilitates a Rite of Passage program for women and conducts workshops, classes and retreats in meditation, stress management, inner healing and Spiritual Tools for Transformation.

Entering The Holy of Holies provides many holistic services that include meditation classes, Spiritual Tools for Transformation: (The Teachings), Woman's Rite of Passage, Stress Management through Movement and Meditation, Reiki, as well as private Meditation Consulting.



Nafisa takes some time to chat with us about her inspiration for pursuing her passions,

**ymib:** Favorite affirmation/inspirational quote?

**Nafisa:** The Lord is my Shepherd. I shall not want (Psalm 23).

**ymib:** Where were you in life when you became inspired to create the Holy of Holies & Who/what would you say has inspired your spirituality and interest in becoming a healer the most?

**Nafisa:** I became most inspired to create Entering

the Holy of Holies, An Institute of Learning and Healing, Inc. (ETHOH) 8 years after I had begun working on my own spiritual development and healing myself. As a professional dance instructor of traditional West African Folklore, I was able to easily incorporate some of the ancient wisdom of various meditation disciplines into my dance classes. One day, a group of about six women surrounded me after dance class and said to me, "we know that you know something more than what you are sharing in class. When are you going to teach that for real?" I soon devised an 8 week meditation workshop that was limited to only 12 people (men and women) that was designed to help people to heal their pain, open their hearts and recreate their lives in love. I felt that a small group was essential to the success of the workshop. In this type of intimate setting the participants have the opportunity to truly get to know one another, to trust each other and have sufficient time to share their stories while learning invaluable Spiritual Tools for Transformation, known as "The Teachings." As a young girl I was most inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. As a young

woman I was most inspired by Mahatma Ghandi.

**ymib: What would you say is the most common issue/ailment you see in most of your students that attend your workshop & what suggestions/tips you would give on dealing with the following?**

**Nafisa:** The most common issue that I see in the participants who attend the Meditation Workshops is unworthiness (insecurity, incompetence, doubt, fear). The most common ailments amongst women are fibroids and endometriosis.

**Stress:** Take care of yourself first! (bathe, get massages, walk in nature, balance work & play!)

**Low Energy:** Sleep! Cut out the carbs (bread, pastries, sweets). Drink plenty of water. Take vitamins/minerals and Ginseng/ Royal Jelly

**Concentration:** Meditate!

**ymib: What are your favorite 4 books that we would find on your bookshelf?**

**Nafisa:** *Play of Consciousness* by Baba Muktananda, *The Four Agreements* by Don Miguel Ruiz, *The Alchemist*/Paulo Coelho, *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hesse



**ymib: Why is it important for you to continue doing what you do, and what do you hope to achieve within the future?**

**Nafisa:** What I do is help people to recreate their lives in Love. Using a combination of meditation and Spiritual Tools for Transformation people have the opportunity to

begin to discover themselves in a way that they never have before. Often this process of transformation is very revealing and quite disruptive. It often is not what people think that it will be. Ultimately however, it brings people back into harmony and balance with themselves, their families and friends, society, nature and the Divine flow of the Universe. People move away from the victim/helpless/hopeless state of being into states of self awareness, self responsibility and self mastery.

It is not only important that I continue doing this work but crucial to the survival of this planet and all of its inhabitants. We are seeing greed, corruption, disregard for human life (self and society), violence, anger and natural catastrophe occurring at an alarming rate. If people do not pause and begin to observe the results of their actions then we will fail to exist on this planet. The mission of ETHOH is to share The Teachings with anyone who desires change – regardless of their faith or religious affiliation – because it is only the healing power of Love that will break this insidious cycle of self hatred, self destruction and death. In the future I hope to inspire and encourage a planet of people to love themselves and each other. That the virtues of forgiveness, tolerance, kindness, compassion and Love reside in the hearts of

everyone, and that the desire to create goodness in life is everyone's Greatest desire.

**ymib: How would you define true happiness?**

**Nafisa:** True happiness exists for me when I am helping people to help themselves. I know that I am in service to God when I am in service to His people. And it matters not (to me) what color, culture, class or creed that His (or Her) people come from. All are welcome into the family of the Holy of Holies.

**ymib: What were some key experiences that you will not forget while studying in India?**

**Nafisa:** I could talk about India forever. I studied at the gurukula (school of the Guru) for six weeks, which is part of the Gurudev Siddha Peeth Ashram in Ganeshpuri, India. Ganeshpuri is about a two hour drive from Mumbai (formerly Bombay). My intention for going to India and living on an ashram was to participate in communal living on a daily basis where the focus was to constantly practice seeing God in everyone and in everything. In addition, our daily schedule was formed around times of prayer and meditation throughout the entire day. Not the other way around! It was very healing. The first chant began in the temple at 3:00am which meant getting up at 2:00am. The Brahman priests had already been up chanting and praying. It was an extraordinary feeling to participate so fully in life in the wee hours of the morning. I truly was on the other side of the world!

I will never forget the people, the sights, the sounds, the smells, the Love in India! I was most impressed with how friendly the people were. Everyone wanted to share the little that they had with you. Small talk was always accompanied with an offer of tea or to come in and sit for a while. One day, a woman I barely knew cooked a full course meal for me and a friend just because she knew that we were leaving soon. She didn't want any help nor did she want any money. We sat and ate and talked for hours!

I remember how vividly my dreams were while in India. Often I felt as if I never went to sleep. But I was rarely tired! My dreams were as real as my waking state is now and they clarified questions and/or thoughts that I had in my mind. Amazing! I never needed an alarm clock in India because every morning I would be awakened by the very distinctive sound of a bird song. It would begin very softly and then become louder and louder, as if to say, "wake up and go and pray!" (smile)/

Perhaps the most profound lesson was my experience of learning that there is only one God (shakti or Life Force Energy). Earlier you asked me about Concentration. When we focus our minds deeply and intently on an object, a sound, our breath or an experience, then we are in a state of concentration/meditation. Once while in such a concentrated state (while cleaning) I had the very good fortune of seeing a Brahman priest and an impoverished child sitting side by side. One was dressed in fine robes, the other in rags. However, what was undeniable about them both was their eyes. They looked exactly the same! Both of their brilliant eyes exuded the exact same sense of deep joy and contentment about themselves and their lives. How was this possible? They came from two totally different backgrounds and had two totally

different lives! The one thing that was ever so apparent in India is the people's devotion to God. I knew that what I was seeing in their eyes had nothing to do with what they "did" in life but who they "were" in life. Both the boy and the priest were completely devoted to God and their love for God was reflected in their eyes in the exact same way! When I went back to my dorm I cleaned my sleeping area so well that a Queen could have slept in my bed. I realize that worthiness and Godliness were all a state of consciousness, one that only comes when you surrender your entire being to loving God with all of your heart and your soul. It doesn't matter if you are a priest, a pauper or a dancer. My intention for going to India in 2000 was to learn that level of love and devotion to God and it continues to be, even as I write my answers to this interview.



**ymib: Could you share with us a few of your favorite rites of passage ideas for young girls?**

**Nafisa:** I have never done a Rite of Passage for young girls, only women over 21. However, if I did do a Passage for young girls I would...

1. Assist them to love & honor themselves through the power of meditation
2. Teach them how to speak their truth by being blatantly honest with themselves
3. Nurture their passion and potential in life
4. Empower them to be

responsible for themselves and their community

**ymib: Please share with us the things that you would recommend for a woman to have in her home regarding the following:**

**Health:** A bath tub, a juicer, windows with sunlight, Lots of Love!

**Spirit:** An altar, candles, flowers, incense (aromatherapy), silence, Lots of Love!

**Beauty:** Open space (no clutter), pictures of family and friends, plants, soft music, warm colors, her favorite picture of herself, and Lots and Lots of Love! (smile)

**What she would ask you:** "Are You Happy?" If not, begin to ask yourself questions and discover why not. And then, find the courage to begin making changes that will allow you to live the life that you want and be happy! This does not mean that life will not present its many trials, challenges and tribulations, it only means that how you face them will make all of the difference in your world!