

# Preface

Spending time in Nature — simply contemplating, or practicing *Karaté* — one cannot help but be in awe of creation. Submerged in the moment — only to emerge with a fresher, clearer outlook on life.

It is these small epiphanies, these many small *satori*<sup>1</sup>, that the author wishes to put into words.

Language and literary tools have limitations when it comes to something so experiential. However, intent and impressions transcend words. Do join the author on this mutual journey, even if separated by spacetime.

## Applied, Validated Wisdom

The author has strived to apply the wisdom gained, making sure the writing is not without substance. However, there are cases where the author intuitively knows something to be true, but due to the stage of life he is in, has no direct experience of it. Weighing that it may still be beneficial to others in that stage, the author has written the thoughts that come through.

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<sup>1</sup> Enlightenment: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satori>

## Format

For each theme explored, there is a musing/poetry, accompanied by a commentary expanding on the musing. The musings, to an extent, take inspiration from *Zen Kōan*<sup>2</sup>, favouring simplicity and compactness over aesthetic and adherence to literary rules.

## Life and Living

The phrase “Life and Living” is from the Karate school the author trains at, the *Bandung Karate Club* (BKC) — where one of the core tenets is to strive to *learn the meaning of life and living*.

‘Living’ is a broad term, but in essence it covers our interactions with our surroundings, Nature, and fellow living beings. The book seeks to show that much can be learned about life and living by contemplating Nature.

Relationships deepen with investment — by understanding one another over a period of time. The relationship one has with Nature is no different. The reader is encouraged to go out into Nature to experience the book’s musings.

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<sup>2</sup> Parables, questions, or, phrases intended to invoke a psychospiritual reaction in a practitioner’s mind, to force them to reflect deeper, e.g., ‘What is the sound of one hand clapping?’, see <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C5%8Dan>

## Motivation

This book is as much for the author as it is for an audience. The author continues to study and apply the teachings he is provided with, and as is human, sometimes fails to apply them.

The same lessons become clearer with time and in new contexts. Most recently, the author had an experience with a tenet he has known for over twenty four years. While he had some inkling that there was a quality most profound, and most 'literal' about that tenet, he simply read it as an interesting philosophical life guideline. But after an intensive training session with a senior teacher of his one late evening, it was as if a set of pearls came elegantly strung together.

The necklace formed was that one tenet.

This book is no doctrine; merely the creative output of a seeker, who feels he has reached a point where his understanding is, perhaps, *stable* enough to share. The author's hope is that what is shared here is universal to the human condition.

## Acknowledgements

First and foremost, the author acknowledges his parents, for their love, and for always providing for him. And more contemporarily, for not (visibly) panicking that their son has decided to take an extended leave with no concrete plan<sup>3</sup>. To his sister, who provided interesting and healthy meals while he wrote.

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<sup>3</sup> Relax, I have guidelines!

## Preface

*Kang* Endar, who has taught him more about living than any education ever could. *Kang* Ray, who treats each student like a diamond in the rough. *Kang* Trisula, senior teacher and friend, who constantly encourages his endeavours, and heart-melded with him on the Lotus, the subject of **Chapter 9**.

Our Grandmaster and Guide, *Kang* Iwa Rahadian Arsanata, for providing us with the BKC — a school that forges us into better humans, and so much more.

Ade Ishs<sup>4</sup>, closest of friends, artist extraordinaire, provided plenty of input on typography and aesthetics. Brendan Griffiths, friend and student, provided critical input on writing style and layout aesthetics. *Senpai* Gerrard Warburton, senior and friend, kindly acted as a tour guide through **Mt. Wombat**.

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4 If you like cool, contemporary jazz, Ade's your man: <http://www.adeishs.com/>