

Maya is the power that causes the outer objective world to seem separate from our inner subjective reality. Maya causes a split between subject and object, causing the seer to experience the seen as different from itself. When we see beyond maya, we experience the seer and the seen as the same. Beyond maya, we see the entire world as a reflection of our Self, and we experience this life as a series of reflections in a mirror. Because of maya, we feel isolated from the universe as a whole.

There is a story that illustrates the power of maya: Once Narada went to visit Krishna. Narada was a great god-sage. Just as there are great yogis among mankind, there are also great yogis among the gods. Narada was such a god-yogi. He traveled through all the planes. There are many tales and legends concerning Narada, and he is mentioned in many of the ancient scriptures. He is revered as the author of the Bhakti Sutras, the "Aphorisms on Divine Love."

Narada went to Dwaraka to see Lord Krishna. He asked Krishna to explain to him what maya is. Krishna replied that maya cannot be explained, that it must be experienced. A few days later Krishna asked Narada to take a trip with him into the desert. Several miles into the desert Krishna said he was very thirsty and asked Narada to fetch him some water. Narada quickly went to find some.

Soon Narada found a little village, and in the village he found a well. At the well fetching water was a most beautiful young woman. Narada was entranced at the sight of her. He had never seen anyone quite so enrapturing, and thought surely she must be a goddess. He began talking to the girl. He was totally enthralled by her. He forgot everything else.

He went home with her and met her father. Narada was so in love with the girl that he asked her father for her hand in marriage. Before long they were married. Narada was so ecstatic with his new wife. Not too much time passed before his father-in-law died, and Narada inherited all his property. Now he was a very responsible man, and had fields and cattle to look after.

In time Narada and his wife had four children. Narada lived a happy life with his wife and children, with his land and his responsibilities. Twelve years passed, and Narada was at the peak of his success. Then suddenly, abruptly, disaster struck. A cyclone hit the land, with great rains and floods. The whole village was swept away in the raging waters. Narada put his family in a boat and tried to save them, but the boat capsized. He grabbed his wife with one hand, three of his children with the other, and put the fourth child on his shoulders. But the current was too strong, and the child on his shoulders was swept away from him. With a cry of despair Narada tried to grab the child, but in doing so he lost his hold on his other children. Narada had never felt such pain in his heart. As the current grew stronger, even his beautiful wife was torn away from him. Narada cried after her in pure agony. Finally a huge wave threw Narada on the shore. He lay there weeping and wailing, overwhelmed with grief and sorrow. Everything he had loved, everything he had lived for had been taken from him. He did not know what to do.

Suddenly, from behind him, came a gentle voice: *Narada, I am so thirsty. Where is my water?*

Narada turned and beheld the beautiful form of Krishna. *Krishna*, he pleaded, *my wife, my children. . .*

There was no wife or children, Krishna replied. *No time has passed, nothing ever happened. You only experienced maya. Now you understand what maya is.*

God and I in space alone
And nobody else in view.
"And where are the people, O Lord," I said,
"The earth below, and the sky o'erhead
And the dead whom once I knew?"

"That was a dream," God smiled and said,
"A dream that seemed to be true.
There were no people, living or dead,
There was no earth, and no sky o'erhead
There was only myself — in you."

"Why do I feel no fear," I asked,
"Meeting you here this way?
For I have sinned I know full well,
And is there heaven, and is there hell,
And is this the Judgement Day?"

"Nay, those were but dreams," the Great God said,
"Dreams that have ceased to be.
There are no such things as fear or sin,
There is no you — you never have been —
There is nothing at all but Me."

— Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Some people are crying every time you see them. They have become crying incarnate — the embodiment of weeping. And some of us have become laughing incarnate — we cannot stop laughing. Some people take life very seriously, but my Guru taught me to take life not so seriously; because once upon a time I took the world very seriously, and I was always sick. So now I take the world in a very humorous way, and I love it.

The world is as you see it. If you want to see it seriously, the world is there. The people are there. The objects are there. If you want to see the world in a very light way, in a very funny way, in a very humorous way, it is there. It just depends on which boat you want to take.

— Gurumayi

If you're looking to find the key to the Universe, I have some bad news and some good news. The bad news is—there is no key to the Universe. The good news is—it has been left unlocked.

— Swami Beyondananda

If you don't have a sense of humor, it just isn't funny.

— Wavy Gravy

In addition to the relief funds detailed below, you can go to the following website for a large listing of relief funds:

www.networkforgood.org/topics/international/earthquake/tsunami122604.aspx

or

go to a couple of my favorites:

www.prasad.org

www.seva.org

South Mountain Travel Cares! *And we know you do too!* Let's show the rest of the world how much Americans do care by donating to the victims of South East Asia Earthquake/Tsunami Disaster. AND, if you email us a receipt that you donated to any of the Disaster Relief funds listed below, we will send you a \$25.00 Gift Certificate for your future vacation package. Together we can make a difference. Email your receipts to WeCare@somotravel.com South Mountain Travel, formerly Empress Travel, 385 Northfield Ave, West Orange NJ 07052, 973-325-2345.

Action Against Hunger

247 West 37th St.
New York, NY 10018
212-967-7800

www.actionagainsthunger.org

Air Serv International

6583 Merchant Place, Suite 100
Warrenton, VA 20187
www.airserv.org

American Jewish World Service

45 W. 36th St., 10th Fl.
New York, NY 10018
212-736-2597
www.ajws.org

Baptist World Aid

Asia Tidal Waves
405 North Washington St.
Falls Church, VA 22046
703 790 8980
www.bwanet.org/bwaid

Brother's Brother Foundation

1200 Galveston Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
412-321-3160
www.brothersbrother.org

ADRA International

Asia Quake Fund
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904
800-424-ADRA (2372)

www.adra.org

**American Jewish Joint Distribution
Committee, Inc.**

DC-South Asia Tsunami Relief
P.O. Box 321
847A Second Ave.
New York, New York 10017
212-885-0832
www.jdc.org

AmeriCares

88 Hamilton Ave.
Stamford, CT 06902
800-486-4357
www.americares.org

**B'nai B'rith International
B'nai B'rith Disaster Relief Fund**

2020 K. St. NW
7th Floor
Washington, DC 20006
212-490-3290
www.bnaibrith.org

209 West Fayette St
Baltimore, MD 21201
<http://www.catholicrelief.org>

**Christian Reformed World Relief
Committee (CRWRC)**

South Asia Earthquake
2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI, 49560
800-55-CRWRC
www.crwrc.org

Church World Service

PO Box 968
Elkhart, IN 46515
800-297-1516
www.churchworldservice.org

**Doctors Without Borders/Medecins
Sans Frontieres**

888-392-0392
www.doctorswithoutborders.org

International Aid

17011 W. Hickory
Spring Lake, MI 49456
800-968-7490
www.internationalaid.org

International Relief Teams

Asia Earthquake/Floods
3547 Camino Del Rio South, Suite C
|San Diego, CA 92108
619-284-7979
www.IRTeams.org

Latter-Day Saint Charities

Welfare Services Emergency
Response
50 East North Temple Street, Room
701
Salt Lake City, Utah, 84150-6800
801-240-3544
ldscharitiesldschurch.org

MAP International

P.O. Box 215000
Brunswick, GA 31521
800-225-8550

151 Ellis St. NE
Atlanta, GA 30303
800-521-CARE
www.care.org

Christian Children's Fund

Child Alert Fund
PO Box 26484
Richmond, Virginia 23261-6484
800-776-6767
www.ChristianChildrensFund.org

Direct Relief International

27 South La Patera Lane
Santa Barbara, CA 93117
805-964-4767
www.directrelief.org

Food for the Hungry, Inc.

Food for the Hungry
Asia Quake Relief
1224 E. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85034
800-2-HUNGERS
www.fh.org

International Medical Corps

Tsunami Emergency Response
1919 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 300
Santa Monica, CA 90404-1950
800-481-4462
www.imcworldwide.org

International Rescue Committee

PO Box 5058
Hagerstown, MD 21741-9874
877-REFUGEE or 733-8433
www.theIRC.org

Lutheran World Relief

South Asia Tsunami
700 Light St.
Baltimore, MD 21230
410-230-2700
www.lwr.org

Mercy Corps

Southeast Asia Earthquake
Dept. W
PO Box 2669

www.map.org

Operation USA

8320 Melrose Ave. .200
Los Angeles, CA 90069
800-678-7255
www.opusa.org

Plan USA

Asia Disaster

155 Plan Way
Warwick, RI 02886
800-556-7918
www.planusa.org

Project Concern International

Asia Tsunamis Press List
5151 Murphy Canyon Road Suite 320
San Diego, CA 92123
858-279-9690
www.projectconcern.org

**SAWSO (Salvation Army World
Service Office)**

South Asia Relief Fund
615 Slaters Lane
Alexandria, VA, 22313
800-SAL-ARMY

Stop Hunger Now

SE Asia crisis |

2501 Clark Ave, Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27607
888-501-8440
www.stophungernow.org

World Emergency Relief

2270-D Camino Vida Roble
Carlsbad, CA 92009
760-930-8001

www.worldemergencyrelief.org

Portland, OR 97208-2669

800-852-2100

www.mercycorps.org

Oxfam America

Asian Earthquake Fund
PO Box 1211
Albert Lea, MN 56007-1211
800-77-OXFAM
www.oxfamamerica.org

Project HOPE

Asia Tsunami Response
255 Carter Hall Lane
Millwood, VA 22646
800-544-4673
www.projecthope.org

Save the Children USA

54 Wilton Road
Westport, CT 06880
1-800-728-3843
www.savethechildren.org

US Fund for UNICEF

General Emergency Fund
333 E. 38th St.
New York, NY 10016
800-4-UNICEF
www.unicefusa.org

World Concern

Asia Earthquake and Tsunami
19303 Fremont Avenue North
Seattle, WA 98133
800-755-5022
www.worldconcern.org

World Vision

P.O. Box 70288
Tacoma, WA 98481-0288
888-56-CHILD
www.worldvision.org