

Words. They are our main medium of exchange. This book is a little island of words that I hope you will visit again and again, for language is a magical tour of hidden meanings, with a treasure for everyone who digs beneath the surface.

Symbol:

from Latin "symbolus"

meaning: token, sign.



We can think of words as a palette of color, which we use to paint our world for others. We have variety and subtlety in language, similar to the variety and subtlety in the variations of color. The likeness to an artist's palette of colors is fitting because we *are* always painting pictures with our words, whether we are speaking, writing, using sign language, or the arts. Through all of these mediums we are attempting to share our reality with others, by using symbols that represent experiences and ideas we want to communicate about.

It has only been a few hundred years since books have become widely available, thanks to mass printing technology. Now, access to a computer means access to the treasury of human thought. But not long ago, the ownership of a simple book was only for the wealthy, and the clerics or scribes who wrote them. The Scribes wielded an enormous amount of power behind the scenes, being the custodians of information and trade, and the voice of priests and royals.

Priest: from Greek,
leader of the herd.
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Remember the words of Edward Bulwer-Lytton, who said, "The pen is mightier than the sword." This quote from 1839 shows the solidification of a great change in the culture of humanity. Individual or collective brute force used to be the rule, now, says our poet friend, it's the power of words that charm the fates. Is he implying that conversation, the feeling interchange between beings, contains more power than violence? Is he referencing the ability of humans to evolve, behaving in a more complex and refined manner? Are we beginning to leave behind some old primitive stories and archetypes, and create a-new? Or was he referring to the power of symbols, numbers and words on coin or paper that carry a value in the material world, and therefore, worldly power? How does the symbolic power of money contain an influence? Perhaps when the heads of state and abstract gods symbols were printed on gold and paper, the unconscious exchanged the reality of experience-for symbols? At some point in distant history, perhaps the god without a face became a minted coin? Where is the power really? It is this crux of the matter, how we have become so dependent on symbols instead of the "real thing" the real experience of our deeper nature-which is humane, wise, creative, and loving-it is this conundrum which I find endlessly fascinating! The original

power within words to invoke experience, this underlying idea continues to hold my passionate interest.

Influence: from Latin (fluid): to flow in, fluid that flows from the stars.



This is part of the real magic connected to words and their deeper meanings. Sanskrit is said to hold the kind of original energy I'm in search of, wherein the sound bears the energy of the thing itself. The sound manifests the thing. This is one of the reasons many mantras are Sanskrit words. Patañjali is the compiler of the Yoga Sutra, in which the Yamas and Niyamas (the do's and don'ts) are laid out as guidelines for right conduct. One of the Yamas is Satya, truthfulness. It is written that for one who speaks only the truth, their word becomes law in the universe. This is part of the real magic connected to words and their deeper meanings-the power to invoke or just be in the experience of-what a word only stands for.

Invoke: to call, give voice.



Words are trail starters, a possible doorway or portal, an entry to a new world, an experience to be explored. The journey of words and their deeper meanings comes to life in the writing of the Indian Mystic, Kabir, as translated by Robert Bly.

Nourishment from The Kabir Book by Robert Bly.

Privacy, late and starting to rain. He signals with his hand- "What do you want'?" "Nourishment". When one glance causes many trees to grow from a single seed. There are many houses here that have posted "This is God's House". Why these shams, inconsistency. I want to say words that flame, but that too is some kind of sham. Right now, the truth cannot be captured with words. The trees in prayer, the birds in praise. Forget anger, and planning war. Open wide the door, and look around inside. See the cup, full of light, waiting for lips to drink. Astonishing that we stay so long near the surface.

Entry to a Parallel World

That's an inspiring poem, and it brings us to the perfect segue word to start with-the word "inspire". Have you ever thought about the fact that words often have a story, a history and energy that is called upon, with the saying and sounding of the words? For example, let's track the story of the word inspire, via the word enthusiasm. It comes from the Greek word "enthousiasmos" meaning "to be inspired", or literally, "to be filled with light". That is what it's like to be enthusiastic isn't it-to feel the happiness and joy flowing in, in that moment filled with light. Understanding a word means that you can trust it. As you hear the word enthusiasm, you trust that it takes you on a healing journey, and you gladly

participate in the meaning, filling with light, feeling your very cells filling with life and light, consciously embodying enthusiasm. In this way, words are meant to connect, or, lead us back to, *the thing itself*. We have gotten so far away from being able to trust where words take us, we almost have to guard our feeling nature and mind, lest we be violated by the meaning the words around us convey. It's also a child's quality, to be able to re-experience the thrill of a word or a story over and over, experiencing where it takes you. But, sometimes the thrill goes away and only the story remains-the vitality gone. The journey stories take us on is often not nourishing or vital...yet...we perpetuate them. There are still so many choices about what we expose ourselves and our children to, and language is one of our greatest human legacies, one we can still discover and develop.

Get Cozy With Your Words

Each of the words presented in *Roots & Wings* has a history, an energy and intention, that has followed the word since its beginning. Each word's story offers insight, and questions to spark ideas about the word and your association with it. *Roots & Wings* is a little island where we can take a deep breath, relax, and ask ourselves, perhaps each other, "What can I actually do, to expand the nourishing connections in my life? How can becoming more intimate with the words I choose and speak, bring me deeper into life? This little island of words is a quiet place to discern, sense, and respond to answers that come from within.

Excerpt from the *Roots & Wings* book by Doryan Dean