

# Michael Brian Baker – “It’s not like you can get joy from some ashram with a coupon.”

Michael is a student of compassion and humility with a deep spiritual connection. He was reluctant with his gift until he fully embraced decades of pain and suffering. Michael is a renown healer, an expert on transformation, and the founding member of The Breath Center in Ojai, CA.

by Hung Tran (<http://www.theyogablog.com/author/hung/>)October 9, 2015

(<http://www.theyogablog.com/wp-content/uploads/MBB-1024x678.jpg>)

What makes my heart skip a beat with joy? Reflection.

Just that question. Now you’ve ignited it, you know.

What is it? It’s rebirth.

What makes my heart skip a beat? The suffering. The journey. The law of economy.

The fact that it all belongs and that the suffering is equal to the resolve.

It’s like the whole path of this grind. This lesson. This big school room. The tests. The trials. The tribulations. That resolve.

What makes my heart skip a beat? Having some really beautiful, powerful things to share. Then watching others just blow up into that same joyful awareness. That’s real.

It’s difficult to get out of that cycle of wanting to stay in that sharing because there’s so much joy around it.

My baby, Elijah, my three year old. And all kids, actually.

My relationship with my partner.

Watching people go through massive pain and suffering. Then coming in and apologizing.

Me being able to do that with others. Landing into the fact that we’re only human, and that as human beings our only real job is to be human. Which includes *all* of it.

To release my expectation of perfection.

Knowing that we've come so far to be gifted this Golden Age we are experiencing right now within this wellness family. Within this family that has a desire to accelerate consciousness and care more for people.

Serve others and being more aware and open and more emotionally intelligent. More connected to how we feel. That realization is very joyful for me.

Forgetting. Forgetting all about it and then going back into the suffering. That's human. That's how sensitive we are.

We're so sensitive. Sensitive beings. It's melancholy. It's an understanding that pain and suffering are not better than or less than happiness or joy. It is a component of the emotional landscape of awareness and the human experience.

Without the true experience of suffering and being in it, there is no true elated, ecstatic joy. The gift of being able to be present in that, and say "Wow, I'm really suffering right now."

There's a joy in that, because there's a resolve.

I'm still discovering it. It's moment-to-moment.

It's not a mastery for me because I'm just a guy. I know that there are people who have mastered it. Maybe the Dalai Lama or Ram Das. Or, I don't know. My teachers, these people I look up to. Maybe sadhus, or holy people, have achieved it.

For me personally the realization is in the moment when it actually works. Then I can kind of feel triumphant like, "Oh yeah I got it."

Yes, but I need to have the element within me also – the inner critic.

I have to be judgmental of myself in those places for the realization of compassion to come through for me. I can see that part of me that is kicking and screaming and wants to cry and be held.

I just went through it last night with somebody. "Why are you acting this way?"

Because I'm a child. We're all children.

It's beautiful that I want to achieve that. That we want to achieve that higher place.

We all want to be super human, right? But I'm just human. When I can get that peace, that's when the real joy comes in. Otherwise, I'm "Oh yeah, here I go doing that again."

It's important to say I came from Ram Das ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ram\\_Dass](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ram_Dass)), Neem Karoli Baba ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neem\\_Karoli\\_Baba](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neem_Karoli_Baba)), Nityananda (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nityananda>), Muktananda (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muktananda>), Guru Mayi ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gurumayi\\_Chidvilasananda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gurumayi_Chidvilasananda)), Ramana Maharshi ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramana\\_Maharshi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramana_Maharshi)), Meher Baba ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meher\\_Baba](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meher_Baba)), Sri Yukteswar ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yukteswar\\_Giri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yukteswar_Giri)), Paramahansa Yogananda ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paramahansa\\_Yogananda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paramahansa_Yogananda)), and all the Tibetan masters. I could go on and on.

The Christ consciousness of all of these incredible teachings that have been filtered down through – I would just call it goodness.

Studying and practicing it now, we have to be brought to that eventually if we're going to find that peace. It's all an inside job.

It's not like you can get joy from some ashram with a coupon.

"Sundays for \$20 you get in and they'll give a dose of enlightenment."

*To be continued...*

*1st of the interview series with Michael Brian Baker at Bhakti Fest  
(<http://bhaktifest.com>) West in Joshua Tree, CA*

(<http://www.theyogablog.com/wp-content/uploads/Group-Shot-Close-Michael-Big-Smile.jpeg>)

Find Michael here: Web (<http://thebreathcenter.com/about-michael/http://thebreathcenter.com>). Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/TheBreathCenter>).

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Hung is a lover, yogi, refugee, change maker, and Editor|Owner of The Yoga Blog. He has a passion for inspiring and helping underdogs.

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