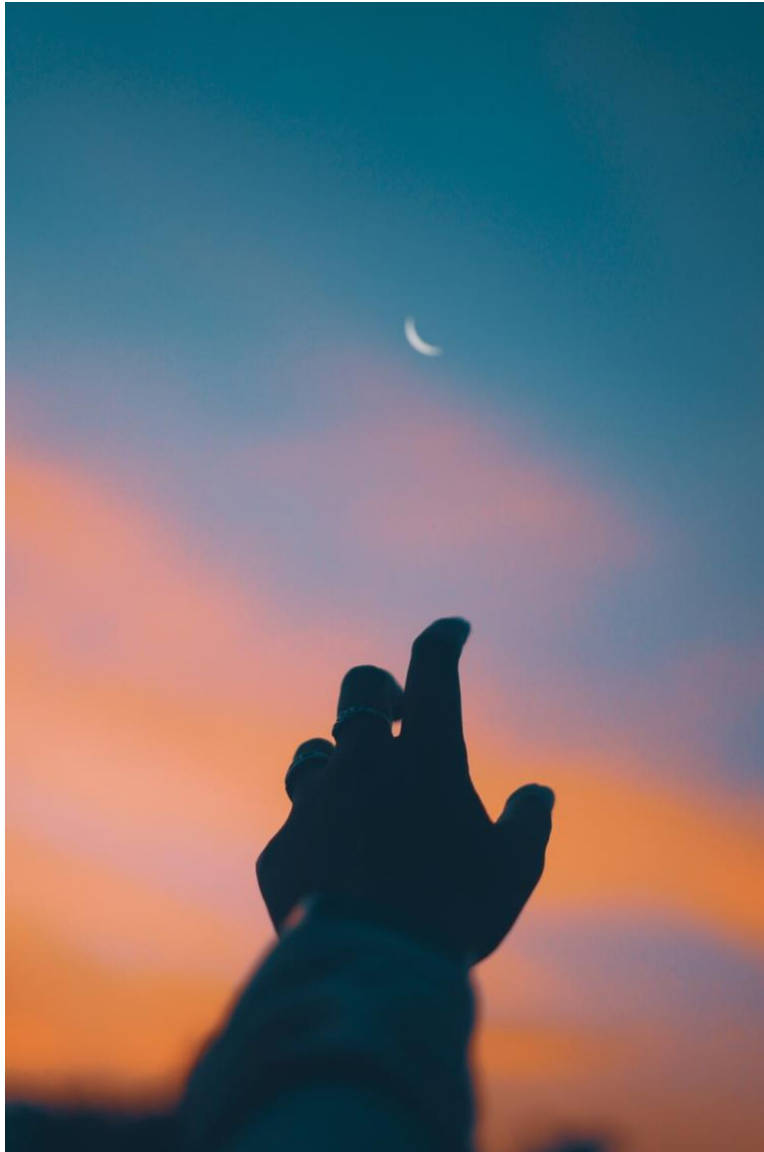




Moon and Finger



“The nun Wu Jincang once asked Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch, to explain passages of the Nirvan Sutra to her. Huineng couldn’t read and he asked her to read the passages aloud. Astonished that the revered Zen master could neither read nor write, Jincang wondered



how Huineng could understand the teachings. Huineng replied: “Words are not truth. Truth is like the moon, and words are like my finger. I can point to the moon with my finger, but my finger is not the moon. Do you need my finger to see the moon?”

— Hansen, Lulu, 2004, NY: Universe Publishing.

“The common error of ordinary religious practice is to mistake the symbol for reality, to look at the finger pointing the way and then to suck it for comfort rather than follow it.”

—Watts, Allan W., p. 23

Reference

From the Autobiography of Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch (A.D. 638-713), in his book *Treasure of the Law Sutra*. Huineng founded the Southern School of Zen, which encouraged intuition and spontaneous enlightenment rather than formal readings and literal teachings of Sutras.

Watts, Allan W., 1951, *The wisdom of insecurity*. New York.

Links

Sanctuary/Practice/Pointing-to Instruction

Image (search “moon and finger”) courtesy of: [Monisha Selvakumar](#) [@monishaselv](#)

The Tim Dukes Method provides an opportunity for self-reflective individuals to cultivate the capacity to receive into consciousness hidden aspects of the self, claiming your unique gifts – ensuring that today’s brilliance successfully transitions into tomorrow’s wisdom. The Tim Dukes Method is designed and implemented by Dr. Timothy Dukes for determined creatives to ensure long-term viability — as a continuing investment in the well-being of yourself, family, organizations, culture, society, and the Earth itself.