

CHAPTER XVI: HOW TO MEDITATE

This is now the question I am constantly confronted with when I talk about *'The Importance of Meditation!'*

How many people seriously ask for help and do not find it?

"The one who is able to meditate (the Muni), who strives for the highest goal and who averts himself from all external appearances by concentrating onto the spot between the eyebrows and who neutralises the streams of Prana und Apana which uniformly flow in the nose and the lung, the one who masters his sense-consciousness and his powers of mind, who overcomes lust, fear and anger, this one will acquire, eternal freedom."
(Bagavad Gita V, 27-28)

Paramahansa Yogananda gives par example help via Meditation-groups and his Study-Lessons where he gives precise instructions and guidelines. Meditation is a science and he promises that that you will come to self-realization and to God-communion when you follow thoroughly his instructions! Isn't this nothing else than a money-back guarantee?

But we have to strive seriously otherwise also this will fail!

In the Self-study-Lessons of Paramahansa Yogananda you will find the key and instructions how to learn to meditate. You will get the key how to unite with the divinity via Kriya Yoga. Don't hesitate. Also meditation is scientific and learnable. **SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP** (as well as of the **ANANDA BROTHERHOOD**) sends you letters how to reach your personal goal. You can come in contact with these two representatives via internet: www.yogananda.com ; www.yogananda-srf.org ; www.anandainfo.com and www.ananda.it. and get further information.

YOU CAN FOLLOW THE EIGHTFOLD YOGA-SYSTEM OF THE PATANDSCHALI:

- 1.) Yama = moral behavior,
Yama: don't hurt any living being, be honest, don't steal, be modest and free from greed
- 2.) Niyama = religious prayers
Niyama: purity of body and spirit, contentment in all life-circumstances, self-discipline, contemplation, surrender to God and master
- 3.) Asana (proper posture)
Right posture: spine straight, immobile body, but convenient posture during the meditation,
- 4.) Pranayama (mastery of the Prana)
- 5.) Pratyahara (averting the physical senses from the exterior objects)
- 6.) Dharana (concentration) focusing on a single object
- 7.) Dhyana (meditation)
- 8.) Samadhi (experience the superconsciousness)
=> Kaivalya (the absolute)

Or you follow the instructions of Saint Germain:

*"For being able to do the first step to self-mastery one has to calm down body and mind from all external activities. The one who dedicates fifteen to thirty minutes to the following exercise (every evening before going asleep and every morning before starting his daily work), will experience miracles if he will do the necessary effort:
Take care that no-one can disturb you. Become totally quiet and imagine, feel how your body becomes wrapped in a dazzling white light. Hold tight this imagination for the first*

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five minutes. Realize and feel intensely the connection between your exterior and higher self. Focus now your concentration to the center of your heart and imagine it as a golden sun.

Then recognize: 'Joyfully do I surrender myself to the plenitude of the powerful God-presence, the pure Christ-consciousness!'

Sense the great shininess of the 'Light' and empower it in every cell of your body for minimum the next ten minutes.

Close now the meditation with the command: I am a child of the 'light' – I love the 'light' – I live in the 'light' – I am protected, enlightened, provided and supported by the 'light' – I consecrate the 'light'.

And the Universal Brotherhood of Light gives you a very simple method how to start to meditate:

During the meditations get into the habit of concentrating on divine light so as to attract it and introduce it within you: it will gradually replace all the old, soiled and worn-out elements with new particles of the greatest purity. And once you have this light, then you must train yourself to send it out to the whole world in order to help human beings.

Many people believe they are justified in giving way to a life of selfishness and mediocrity, pretexting that they have no special talents or qualities. No, nobody can be justified in doing this. Even if you are the most deprived being, the least gifted in every way, you can do this work with the light. In doing it, you achieve something more important and more useful than anything anyone – even with great abilities in other fields – could ever achieve. Even the most deprived being can acquire this superior state of consciousness: working to attract light and send it to all human brothers.

You see meditation is possible ... for everyone who desires. Also the Vipassana-movement (www.dhamma.org) gives you a very simple method: Concentrate yourself onto your breath: >Breathe in – Breathe out – Breathe in – Breathe out – Breathe in – ...< Do it in a steady and regular rhythm. Concentrate your mind on it. And if it wanders, bring it back, as long as it is needed. Be steady and indefatigably! Do not hesitate if it doesn't work immediately. Believe that everything needs its time!

I love to concentrate myself onto the third eye, the white light which gradually increases and envelopes me and later my closer surrounding, the city I live in, the country, the continent, the planet, etc. I become one with the light and I feel inspired and enlightened to start my day or continue my work. Everything needs training. Start at the beginning with five or ten minutes and then day by day (or week after week) add a minute to it. ... and finally you are able to meditate for one, two or even three hours without having any problems with hurting legs, the back or whatever!

Read the following thoughts of the Universal Brotherhood of Light which gives you additional guidelines how to succeed!

Meditation is a difficult exercise, because it requires great mastery of thought. Now thought is rebellious, it likes to wander, to roam, and if you try to stop it abruptly, you will block your mind. This mechanism known as the mind must be put to work gently, just as you allow the engine to warm up before you drive off in your car. Therefore, when you want to meditate, do not attempt to control your thought immediately: it will talk back, rebel, and perhaps even knocks you down! Begin by putting yourself in a state of peace and harmony, then, gently, lead your thought in the direction you want it to take. Soon it will be at your disposition and will obey you. You must be very clever, very diplomatic with your thought. When you have learned to dominate it, it will continue throughout the day in the direction you wish, without any intervention on your part.

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And:

The spiritual plane is structured and organized in such a way that the mere thought of someone – or of a specific element – enables the sender of this thought to touch that person or that thing directly, wherever they may be. It is thus unnecessary to know the exact location, as on the physical plane, where maps or exact addresses are necessary. On the spiritual plane, the divine plane, it is sufficient for you to concentrate your mind strongly to lead you exactly where you want. If you think about health, you are already in the region of health. If you think about love, you are in the region of love. If you think about music, you are in the region of music. That is why a disciple of initiatic school dedicates a certain time each day to working with meditation in order to visit the realms of the invisible world where he knows he will find all the elements necessary for his fulfilment.

And:

You feel you need protection? Think about the light. Try to have it penetrate you with the help of meditation and prayer. In the initiatic sense, light is something other than the physical phenomenon we know. In spiritual science light refers to all the beneficial entities; once these entities dwell within you, they put obstacles in the way of bad forces. This does not mean that light will stop you from being tormented at times. Unfortunately, as long as we live on earth, we are sheltered from attacks or struggles. Even an initiate is obliged to seek protection. Yes, even the purest, greatest, most powerful initiate must constantly think of this protection by putting barriers of light, circles of flame between himself and the evil spirits that come to assail him. So how can weak and ignorant people think that they do not need any protection?

And:

Try during the meditations and prayers to elevate yourself always higher. To help you, imagine you are climbing a mountain. This image will take you to another mountain within you, and little by little you will reach the summit, the causal plane, where you will have greater opportunities to make your best desires and thoughts become reality.

Jesus said: 'Build your house on rock.' Rock is a symbol of the causal plane. In the causal plane you are safe, nothing can reach you, because you are very high up and on very solid ground. Whereas if you build your house on the mental plane or the astral plane, where thoughts and feelings of a more selfish, personal nature dwell, you will be bogged down in the quagmire and you will always be vulnerable. You must set up home further up, on the heights of the causal plane. Only then will you be invulnerable, out of reach.

And:

All the elements of nature – valleys, springs, mountain summits, precipices, etc. – are laden with symbolic meaning and correspond to realities of the inner life. Someone who meditates on a philosophic and mystic truth ascends inwardly to a high summit since this truth puts him in contact with Heaven, and the source that begins to flow within him purifies and vivifies him. To aim at the summit means to have a high ideal. Nourishing within oneself the noblest thoughts and feelings. To fall into a precipice means to give in to the vilest instincts by which one is gradually engulfed. But the summits and precipices are closely related: the higher the summits, the deeper the precipices. Here is another truth that is worth meditating on.

And:

Nothing is more difficult than to control your train of thought. This is why meditation is a particularly tricky exercise, which should not be undertaken carelessly, without knowing certain methods. Suppose you want to catch a horse that has bolted; if you go and simply block its path, it will knock you over. It is far better to run beside it and then try to grasp it by the mane or hold it back by its head-collar. Well, the same goes for thought in order to

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concentrate on one particular subject, not only will you never succeed, but if you persist in your attempts to stop it, you will block it altogether. Before you can begin to concentrate your mind you must subdue the runaway horse within you. And before you can subdue it you must begin by trying not to confront it. Begin by allowing the horse to run freely for a few moments and then, when you feel it is time to put an end to all its gambolling and it begins to trust you, jump onto its back and drive it on in the direction you have chosen to ride.

And:

Meditate on unity. Try to unify and focus your energies on the highest possible goal and persevere in the same direction day and night without ceasing. Those whose weakness is physical can meditate on unity in the form of health. Those who yearn for light can work to bring unity into their intellect. The principle at work here is the same as in a central power station which supplies a whole region with electricity: in each house, with the flick of a switch you can turn on lights, heater, cookers, refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, radios, televisions, tape recorders and so on. And this is what happens when you establish unity within your being: all your organs receive the current they need and your heart begins to love, your brain to think and your will to act.

And:

When you become more and more conscious of the existence of angels, archangels, and the whole of the angelic hierarchy, you become impregnated with their qualities; you become more alive, more enlightened, and your whole inner world is enriched. At the same time you must remain very modest and know that many of these beings are still very far out of your reach.

Begin by trying to get in touch with the saints, initiates and great masters, whose mission it is to help human beings. Then rise higher still, and try to reach the angels, because the angels are the closest to us: They listen to us, help us, and grant our desires. You can also try to invoke the archangels. But do not attempt to go higher. In infinity, worlds without number exist, and the higher angelic hierarchies in deepest space are not in touch with human beings. They have other work to do, far away. You should know of the existence of these superior hierarchies and can even invoke them; but in order that your prayers and meditations may achieve results, you must address those beings closer to you.

There exists another great help to succeed in meditation: Watch the sunrise! Because the sun represents God Himself! Concentrate on the sun and you become more and more enlighten, warm and generous as He is!

Disciples learn to mobilize their thoughts, their desires, and even all tendencies of their lower nature, and so realize a sublime ideal. And the sun can help us in this work of unification and harmonization. As you watch the sunrise in the morning, think about your conscience moving closer to your own sun, your spirit, your higher self, to fuse with it. When you will have succeeded in pacifying and unifying all these opposing forces pulling you this way and that and so throw them in one luminous, salutary direction, you will become such a powerful center you will be able to shine in all directions, like the sun. Indeed, those who have managed to sort out their own problems in order to be free, can begin to attend to the whole of humankind, and they themselves come to resemble the sun. They live in such freedom, they widen their field of consciousness to include the whole human race, to whom they send the profusion of light and love which overflows from them.

However, in order to be able to shine, we must learn to concentrate all the powers of our being and steer them in one divine direction.

So, look at the sun, the centre of our solar system, try to find the centre in you, the centre of universal love: your spirit – almighty, wise, and omniscient – and draw nearer to it every day! If you remain disconnected from the centre, you will be shaken around, at the mercy of

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disorganised and conflicting currents. Of course, you will tell me that your daily tasks force you to leave the centre to go to your activities at the periphery.

Yes, but moving away from the centre, when necessary, does not mean cutting the link with the centre. On the contrary, the more activities we have in the world – the periphery – the stronger should be the link with the centre, with the spirit. It is from this centre that come the energy, light and peace we need to manage our affairs efficiently.

And here you get an idea about the difficulties you may have when you start to meditate. But this could be also when you do it for longer and you didn't prepare yourself. Read it and note what is important for you:

You may feel that the result of your meditations and prayers are negligible, even non-existent. That is because you are aiming for the heights without first getting rid of your old, thick, rough clothes – symbolically speaking. What can your soul hope to receive if you are still wearing these heavy layers? They still form a barrier which prevents Heaven from illuminating your soul and sending you the replies to your questions. Take these fusty old things off – get rid of selfish schemes and desires, mistaken ideas and stingy pettiness – and present yourself before Heaven wearing light, transparent garments. When you have done this and wish to communicate with Heaven, you will only have to close your eyes, and immediately you will become aware of divine blessings pouring into you.

And:

Day and night we allow our thoughts to be filled with all kinds of futilities. This is why, when the time comes to meditate, to unite with the light, we encounter major difficulties. So many people complain how hard it is to meditate, to concentrate one's mind on a spiritual subject, because they are constantly invaded by all kinds of disparate thoughts and feelings which distract them. There are even dramatic cases where, in the encounter with one's self which meditation entails, some people are so deeply moved and caught off their guard by the nature of the impressions and currents passing through them, that they imagine that these were sent by others who wished them harm. No, you should never attribute the turmoil you experience to an external cause. People create, multiply and amplify chaotic thoughts and feelings within themselves through the life they lead. They may not realize it during their day-to-day lives. But as soon as they finally want to stop for a moment and unite with the light, in silence, they feel invaded by undesirable presences, which they themselves have attracted. Begin therefore by looking for the cause of your problems within yourself and work at controlling your thoughts. And then one day you will succeed.

And:

Human beings have got into the habit of busying their intellect to such a disorganized way that they are no longer in control of their thoughts. And it is this utterly disorganized, cacophonous thinking that prevents them from elevating themselves beyond the astral and mental planes and sense Heaven.

If we want to taste the realities of the spiritual world we must learn to stop our thought process. The wise men of India claimed that the intellect is the assassin of reality. And this is true: Our intellect allows us to obtain a great deal of information superficially, but we will never get to know the reality, the quintessence. It is the heart which has been granted the capacity to penetrate reality. However, to initiate the heart is not the physical heart, nor even feeling. When they speak of 'the intelligence of the heart', what they actually mean is the soul, and it is the soul alone that has the capacity to feel the deep reality of things.

And:

Concentration and meditation are exercises that permit us to gather and store up spiritual energies that we can then have at our disposal in our different activities. But this exercise can only be truly beneficial for someone who can remain absolutely motionless. Yes, you

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first need absolute silence: no noise – even the most imperceptible – not the least rustle or creaking must trouble this silence. You waste your energies when you move. Before meditating you can move as much as you want, but during your meditation do not move at all, otherwise you will never manage to concentrate your energies on a spiritual work.

And:

Do not say you have no means of knowing if things are right inwardly, because you actually have a criterion by which to measure your inner state and this criterion is light. When you meditate or you are in a highly spiritual state, you can sometimes feel that everything in you becomes luminous, as if lamps had been lit, as if a sun were shining within. You even feel this light shining through your face, your hands, the whole of your body. Why? Because as soon as you elevate yourself towards the higher levels of goodness, generosity, gentleness and purity, light generates within you, you feel it, you see it and everything lights up. Whereas if you give into lower states of consciousness, you do not even have a look in the mirror, you physically feel the darkness on your face. So, never forget the criterion of light.

And:

People sometimes complain: 'I've been trying to meditate for years, but my brain always seems to seize up and it gets me nowhere.' This is because they have not understood that the different moments of one's life are not isolated units, they are connected to all those that have gone before and which we call 'the past'. It has never occurred to them that if they want to meditate the next day, they are going to have to get their brain and their whole organism ready in advance for the mental work involved. Suppose you have quarrelled with someone: the next morning, when you are trying to meditate, you find yourself going over the whole quarrel in your mind and planning what you will say when next you meet. So much for your meditation! Instead of soaring to divine regions you have spent your time grubbing about in the past. And as the same thing repeats itself year after year, no wonder you get no results. Man is capable of great achievements through his thought, but only if he knows a certain number of truths and, in particular, the fact that every moment of our lives is connected to all those that have gone before.

And:

When one lingers in the dust and fog of the plains one's vision is always hazy. But when one rises to higher altitudes everything can be seen with the utmost clarity. These physical phenomena have their correspondences on the spiritual plane. Dust symbolizes the ordinary, everyday thoughts of the lower intellect, the intrigues and dishonest scheming that go on the level of the masses. Fog, on the other hand, represents our murky, impure feelings. Dust is produced by the lower mental plane whereas fog and cloud are produced by the effervescence and passions of the lower astral plane and, in both cases, our vision is blurred. This is why a disciple must constantly endeavour to rise above these dense layers of dust and fog by means of meditation, prayer and contemplation. In this way he will emerge from them into the light and be able to see clearly.

And:

There are all manner of books about occult science that suggest practices for gaining access to the invisible world, but do not take up these suggestions, because you will find yourself venturing on dangerous ground. If, one day, you would like to leave your body, to have an out-of-body experience, here is an exercise that is quite harmless. Some mornings, when the sky is grey or misty, you may feel sleepy, so instead of trying to concentrate and meditate (which would anyway be useless in such conditions), try to still your thoughts completely. Allow your soul to extend throughout space, imagining that it rejoins the universal soul, melting into and fusing with it; then, when your soul returns, it will bring back

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impressions of all it has contemplated. But have no illusions: the quality of all you see depends on you, on the nature and quality of your desires, feelings and thoughts. So, if you wish to be in contact with the invisible world, begin by purifying your own inner world.

And:

Sometimes I am asked to explain to people why, during meditation, they experience the disturbing feeling of being uncontrollably swept face to face with something terrifying. As they obviously do not understand this phenomenon, I explain: having left their physical body, they drifted into the obscurity of the lower astral regions, where they experienced this frightening sensation of being pursued and threatened. Encounters in the astral plane are not always reassuring. If you have similar experience during your meditation, react quickly and return at once into the shelter of your physical body. Prolonging this experience could be fatal, so do not let curiosity tempt you to explore this new and unknown realm. Make every effort to return into your body as quickly as possible, because you are not yet strong enough to confront the entities of the astral plane.

And:

When we have very lofty and spiritual aspirations we trigger a reaction from our lower nature, which tries to stir up other forces to counteract our aspirations and force us to abandon them. But when a disciple is vigilant and in the habit of analysing himself these tricks of his lower nature fail to achieve their goal, because while he is working and meditating and building on the spiritual plane he calls on invisible beings who come and watch over him and protect him. The emblem of Freemasonry – the primitive form of which was based on true science – depicts a mason at work with a towel in one hand and a sword in the other. This is the symbol of a disciple: whilst he is working with the towel another being within him, a being symbolized by the sword, is keeping watch and casting rays of light all around so that his enemies cannot slip in under cover of darkness and destroy all his good work.

And:

As soon as they embark on the spiritual life, most people are confronted with the problem of meditation: they do not know how to concentrate. Why? Because they have not learned how to choose subjects for meditation; they throw themselves into it blindly, with no method. You must be very clear about this. The first rule, of course, is to choose a subject of a spiritual nature, and the second is that this subject should be something heartfelt. The love you have for a person or an object is what attaches you to him or it. When you do not love, you are, if I dare say so, like a stamp without glue: you will not stick!

Beginners make the mistake of wanting to concentrate at once on the most abstract, philosophical and mystical matters: truth, eternity, infinity, the Absolute, or the Supreme Being. This is a mistake. Begin by concentrating, for example, on a pure, beautiful image that you love, an image of nature or art. Your mind will get into the habit of concentrating in this way, and gradually you will be able to meditate on more abstract subjects. To get results in the spiritual life, you must know how to use the marvellous power of love.

You think you have a clear idea now how to meditate and to unite with the divine regions in the invisible world? So unite with them and become a benefactor for this world, to become a

“LIGHTWORKER!”

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