



MEDITATION

We need meditation because every one of us wants to be happy. Nobody can be happy without knowing his true nature, and it is through meditation that our true nature gets revealed to us.



The mind is either in the past or in the future but those who possess their mind are always in the present. This is because we are always in the present it is only our mind than is either in the future or the past! This is the whole conflict. We exist in the present and the mind is away in dreams of tomorrow or the memories of the past. The mind is never ready to function exactly here and now. If it does function here and now even for one moment, then this is what we know as the state of meditation. To be here and now means no thoughts but simply 'we', the pure 'I', the pure existence without thoughts, i.e. awareness without thoughts. When awareness is there without thoughts, then this is what we call a spontaneous life. 'Spontaneous life' means happiness and dance. All our worries are either about the future or the past.



The purpose of meditation is to find our real existence. We go into our own self and we try to find out who we really are. The last stage of that experience is known as Self-realisation.



Naturally, everybody is happy in his own home. Through meditation you may some day find your real home - that is your real Self, your true Self, which is also the Self of everyone. This means an end of the conflict caused by your illusion of separateness from others and totality.



As long as the mind is involved in the outside world, it cannot find its own reality. Therefore, when we start to seek our own reality, first of all we cut off our senses and mind from outside objects.



Real meditation is when there are no thoughts and no effort - only you are. In truth no one can meditate but meditation happens. It happens when it happens.



Meditation is the inner, indescribable state that sometimes happens and happens by itself - the inner emptiness which you cannot bring about by effort.



Meditation is neither running after thoughts nor running away from thoughts. Meditation is witnessing or observing without attachment or aversion, liking or disliking.



We meditate because we want to be with our own Self. A person who is not with his own Self, is in trouble. Only he can be happy who is perfectly at ease with his own Self.



Every intelligent person would like to have a happy and contented life. Meditation is one of the important methods in daily life to achieve this realisation. Those who want to be happy and contented should practise meditation in their lives. Those who do not want to be happy and peaceful need not practise it. It is a clear choice. Everyone is free to follow his own path.



In the domain of physical sciences, scientists are trying to discover the origin of the universe. In the field of spirituality a seeker tries to discover the cause and purpose of his own existence. In the field of scientific research there are two elements: the person who conducts the experiment, and nature which is the object of experiment. In the field of spirituality the experimenter makes experiments on himself. He himself becomes the object and subject of the experiment. His own body becomes the laboratory for making the experiment. The experiment of going deeper and deeper into one's existence is known as meditation and the objective is to find out what a person really is.



Meditation is an effort to reach a gradual balance between the physical, the mental and the emotional aspects, and then finally discover spiritual aspect of existence. When that spiritual aspect is experienced, the person becomes fully evolved. Then he is fully with himself and understands the meaning and purpose of human life and the purpose of the whole cosmic arrangement. He understands the relationship between the individual and the cosmos, and all his questions are answered for all time. All problems are solved and he alone lives a happy and satisfactory life on Earth.



We must come to know who we are in reality; that is, to become our own Self. Meditation is the method for realising the essence of our own existence, which is nothing but the essence of the existence of all totality.



When one continues with meditation regularly, after some time, depending on one's past evolution, mental make-up, cultural background, etc., some glimpses of peace start appearing. But do not be deluded by these glimpses. Sometimes you will experience peace and harmony, which is very nice, but do not think you have become a yogi!



People develop various ideas. For two or three days they may experience harmony within themselves and they decide that they are perfect yogis. They start thinking that there might be some disciples waiting for them! Why not then have an ashram and some disciples? Do not become a prey to such deceptive thoughts.



Besides doing our duty, we should also practise some meditation. Meditation means observation of the Self by the Self. The conflict inside is nothing but that of conflicting thoughts. When we sit patiently for some time and try to observe ourselves within, we feel that thoughts are there, coming and going, coming and going. If one continues with this practice, a time comes when thoughts start coming less and less. In this way one advances towards finding one's own true existence, the Self.



As soon as a seeker starts sitting for meditation, he faces the problem of an emergence of many thoughts and memories. Previously, the seeker was chasing after a man or woman in the world, but now, in meditation, that same man or woman is found playing inside! The seeker exclaims: "What is this? So many thoughts and forms inside!" The chaos found inside is unimaginable. Outside in the normal state at least there was some system. Inside there is no such system, just hundreds and thousands of thoughts and memories mixed together! Sometimes a thought of a horse comes to him; then a thought of a donkey; and after that arises a memory of a musician playing a violin. What does it mean? What is all this happening! Disgusted, one asks: "Am I mad?" Sometimes people visit me and say: "As soon as we started meditation, problems of inner chaos started. Are we becoming mad?" Then I tell them: "You were always mad! This is only the beginning of the awareness of madness. Until you started meditation you were not aware that you were mad. Now you have started meditation and, by stopping yourself from running outside, you are becoming aware of your madness. If you continue, this madness will gradually decrease, and some day you will become a sane person!"



In the beginning one is not even aware of the thoughts. They come and go and one's existence remains identified with one's thoughts. But, in due course, because of the conflict and anguish created by useless thoughts, one starts feeling that thoughts are the problem. The thoughts are in the mind, and mind itself starts seeing its own creation.



Meditation happens to us by God's grace and not through effort. We try to meditate and the result is that some day meditation happens to us. Effort is not compatible with what is known as the state of meditation. All efforts end at the time when real meditation happens to us. It seems to be a paradox or contradiction but it is not. All that we are trying to do is to make an effort to discipline ourselves so that someday we experience our true state.



These days meditation is much propagated. We hear invitations such as: "Meditate! Come here and we will tell you a method, and you will realise the truth within a few days!" However, such statements are full of hypocrisy. In the eight-fold system of Patanjali, meditation is the seventh step, and often I ask what happened to the six steps before that - *Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara* and *Dharana?* *Dhyana* is seventh and *Samadhi* is the last step.



Mind has certain characteristics, one of which is that our mind in one moment can be many things. As in a dream, one is seeing a beautiful child, a donkey, a house, a train, all at the same moment. The mind itself becomes all these things, so mind can

become several things at one moment. Such is the capacity of the mind. This is all the play of the mind. Now, this being a play of the mind, it has been said by the saints that mind alone is the cause of bondage and liberation of human beings. So all this is the creation of the mind, and the witnessing also is done by the mind itself. Thoughts arise in the mind, and the mind sees these thoughts. But the power of seeing and knowing is not of the mind. It is from the source - the original source - the Spirit. It is only reflected in the mind.



“What are we to do about thoughts during meditation?” Try to remain indifferent to them. When they come, let them come, when they go, let them go. Try to be a witness, an indifferent person. This is the beginning. Gradually, thoughts calm down and you proceed further to experience your true Self.



You are you, and thoughts are thoughts, and you are not the thoughts. And because you are not thoughts, let them be. Do not struggle with them. Do not try to resist these thoughts when they come. They will come more if you struggle with them. When you like something, you entertain thoughts of it. When you dislike something, you struggle with thoughts. But when you are indifferent, they start calming down by themselves. Be a witness only and not a participant!



The attitude towards thoughts and emotions should be like the attitude that we have towards an uninvited guest. How would you behave towards an uninvited guest? You do not quarrel with the person but you do not welcome the person either.



Thoughts are nothing but the vapour that arises in your mind, of many past memories, and memories giving birth to desires for the future. Nothing more than that.



The power of thought that is given to human beings is very important. In the beginning you have worldly thoughts, as you contemplate physical pleasures. But when you follow the spiritual path you come to the conclusion that such pleasures are not worthwhile. Even at this moment thinking is going on. Gradually those previous thoughts start disappearing and new thoughts start coming. It is at the highest and final stage that thoughts stop or seem to stop, and you have peace. It is only after Self-realisation that thoughts, ideas and questions disappear.



Remember that when one thinks in meditation: “I have no thoughts.”, one is already having thoughts of ‘not having thoughts’, one is thinking. How else will you come to know that you have no thoughts? It was only through thoughts that you started feeling that you had no thoughts. It is not so easy, though people say it is. What happens is that gradually a stage comes when thoughts come and go but they do not disturb you. The inner peace that starts taking shape is not disturbed by the thoughts. When that stage comes, you do not become aware of thoughts but rather you are at peace with your own Self. In this way, you gradually experience your real existence.



One thought comes and another goes. Let it happen. Just be yourself, the awareness! In the light of the awareness let things happen. Everything is all right. If you continue in this way a time comes when there is awareness and no disturbance and you have peace. Do not worry about small things - let them happen as they are happening and meditation will cure the disease.



Gradually, you come to the conclusion that you and your thoughts are different. You are not the thoughts. When this state develops (that is the observer distances himself from his thoughts) the thoughts gradually start becoming calm. After that impartial or passive observation develops. One may also sometimes have active participation, which means that one is trying to become a party to or take an interest in those thoughts and emotions. This should not be done. If somebody starts quarreling with the thoughts, that is also active participation. So we should be neither friendly with the thoughts nor an enemy to the thoughts. We observe them and after some time the observer finds himself stronger than the thoughts. It is the natural principle that the one who is stronger stands his ground and the weaker one retreats. A day comes when thoughts which have become weak ultimately start calming down and disappearing. Then you, the observer or rather the observation, find your own Self in your own Self. This is the beginning of your real life.



Remember that one day the practice of meditation will undo the knots of thoughts.



It is a misunderstanding in the spiritual world to assume that meditation is the only path. This is not the case. There are other paths and there are different paths for different people. If you find happiness in serving others, for you service will be better than meditation and there is no need to meditate. The path of selfless service is independent and it is a complete path within itself. It takes the person to the same height, the same realisation, to which meditation takes him.



One may go on meditating for many years but as long as one does not open up and one is not ready to serve, one does not develop.



The impressions of the pleasures we enjoyed in this and earlier lives are there in the mind. But it should be understood that the encounter with ideas, thoughts, sensations, or memories, while trying to meditate, is not the beginning of a new activity for enjoyment. When a sensation is generated inside, we are motivated into activity and go to have the pleasure. But in meditation new layers of thoughts, emotions, and sensations are opened up. These layers gradually become diluted and weaker.



In the beginning there is not happiness in meditation with many people, because impressions or memories continue to be in the mind. But if meditation goes on for some time, the impressions will also settle down and, then a stage comes when you have *Sattvic* joy without any connection with the objective world.



Real meditation does not happen by ‘doing’. In the beginning make an effort to meditate so that one day meditation just happens. It is a matter of disciplining ourselves.



In meditation, when you sense jealousy, greed, lust, anger and suchlike coming from inside, you should be a detached observer of those emotions. You are the observer and they are the objects that are seen. You should not become one with them. You should neither be appreciative nor critical but just a detached observer. Gradually these emotions will start becoming diluted and weakened.



In our existence there are two elements: one that is seen and another that is the seer. The observer should discover that he is stronger than the seen, and, in this way, self control will come. By this process, many impressions accumulated in the subtle body in this life and in earlier lives will disappear. Whatever is seen becomes weak. If the observer is not overpowered by the seen and stays just as an observer, then the observed objects (the passions, the thoughts and the emotions) start melting away. They start getting weaker and weaker. A time will come when you will be there in your own true nature, without being attracted to the outside objects. You will be a detached observer, nearer to your own Self.



What is the purpose of meditation? The purpose is to find our true nature, our Self. The purpose is to experience that we are not the body, not the senses, not the mind, not the intellect, and not the ego. What are we then? We are what we are! They call it ‘Atman’, ‘Spirit’, ‘consciousness’, or some other name. It is the indescribable state of our own Self - our own existence - the consciousness which was never born, and, therefore, will never die, and which exists in everyone, everywhere. When that experience happens - and that experience happens inside of us - then all problems are over.

