
General Notes on Meditation

7 POSTURES FOR MEDITATION

1. 7 Postures for Meditation

- i. Crossed legs, with the left leg inside
- ii. Straight back, like a stack of coins
- iii. Shoulders spread out, like the wings of an eagle
- iv. Neck slightly bent
- v. Eyes open, focused and downcast to about one metre in front
- vi. Mouth slightly open with the tip of the tongue touching the upper palate
- vii. Hands in equanimity position (Hands on the lap, right palm over the left, with thumbs gently touching)

CONCENTRATION MEDITATION

2. Breathing Meditation (Concentration Meditation)

- i. Begin with a long exhalation through both nostrils visualizing all anger, hatred, negative action, disappointment and stress coming out.

The following to be repeated for 3 sets

- ii. **Subtly**, inhale and exhale through both nostrils – visualizing all the good and positive thoughts flowing inwards during inhaling and all the bad and negative thoughts (desire, ignorance, anger, etc.) going out during exhaling.
 - iii. **With a little force**, inhale and exhale through both nostrils – with the same thought as above.
 - iv. **Deeply**, inhale and exhale through both nostrils – with the same thought as above.
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THE MIND OF ENLIGHTENMENT

3. Prelude: Generating Motivation: The Mind of Enlightenment

- i. Essence of the practice is to reduce the ego of “I”.
- ii. Selflessness and compassion are not just to benefit others but these are also what we need to have a happy mind.
- iii. If our negative emotions and moods are left untreated, these will become our personality with time.
- iv. Through the aspiration to benefit other beings, we create inner equality.
- v. Through meditation, we train our mind to have more consideration for others and to see other people’s point of view, which is key to develop understanding and forbearance. This helps us to forgive and prevent us from getting upset. Thus, our mind will be at peace.
- vi. Generate the motivation of becoming the source of happiness for oneself and all other beings as a result of one’s meditation and actions of everyday.

APPRECIATION MEDITATION

4. Appreciation Meditation

Appreciation Meditation helps to bring light to the present

After bringing your focus on your breath, concentrate and contemplate.

APPRECIATE:

- Your body and whatever degree of health you have;
- The wonderful people in your life, who are kind to you, support you, help you;
- What you do, your career, your lifestyle, your community and beyond;

Develop your sense of satisfaction. Appreciation gives satisfaction and satisfaction gives happiness.

“Draw happiness from what we have now!”

5. Meditation on Change

Major changes are visible to our eyes. Example: death, divorce, destruction of a building, etc.

Be aware of the minute changes, that go unnoticed, happening each and every second that lead up to these major changes. Example: relationships, ageing, etc.

It is important to know and be aware of the facts that:

- Anyone that is born must die
- Anything that is accumulated will finish
- Any gathering will disperse
- Any building will one-day crumble
- Any person in the most powerful and famous position will one day have to step down
- Friends can change
- Enemies can change
- Happiness will change
- Suffering and pain will change
- Concepts will change
- Emotions will change
- Whatever happened yesterday is today's dream
- Whatever we experience today will be tomorrow's dream

Appreciation meditation and meditation on change always go together.

Appreciation gives us a sense of joy and meditation on change prepares us for the uncertainties in this life with the understanding that nothing in this life is permanent. Whether we accept it or not, change is a natural phenomenon. Things change, and that is why life is so precious. We should not hold on to or be attached to our belongings, people, status, etc. Rather utilize them to benefit all beings without clinging. These two meditations complement each other resulting in a very positive understanding when practiced together.

6. Self- Reflection Meditation: Cause and Effect of our Actions

- Think of the people who have an impact on our life (both good and bad).
- Remove the labels and see the beings (people) behind the labels with eyes of equality.
- Ask ourselves, how do we want them to treat us?
- We want respect, love, consideration, caring, attention, understanding, etc.
- Then ask ourselves, how have we treated them?
- Do we treat them the same way as we expect them to treat us?
- If you feel that you have been quite positive, you should rejoice and continue.
- If you have been unappreciative and unkind to others, by accepting this, we can then take action to repair our mistake, rather than shy away from it, worried that we are bad or somehow wrong.
- While you may regret your actions, but remember that there is no benefit in replaying it over and over again in your mind because there is no point in worrying about what cannot be changed. Henceforth, concentrate on how can we transform for the better.
- Develop compassion and wisdom which can transform our mind and our attitude to be a better human being.

7. Meditation on Understanding the Mind as the Projector of Everything

- Samsara is because of Karma (Actions)
- Karma is because of Desire
- Desire is because of Ignorance & Labelling
- Our concepts are like a mirror and our experiences are like the reflection in the mirror.
 - Outer ignorance: Thinking that one's happiness, sadness, all emotions are dependent on factors outside oneself;
 - Inner ignorance: Not realizing the non-dualistic nature of mind
- **Labelling gives rise to Desire; Desire leads to Actions; Actions bring about Results**
- To be free of samsara, one must understand that everything comes from the projection of one's own mind.

Whatever appears to be truly existent is merely what mind in delusion creates; this mind of ours is also from the beginning devoid of any existence inherently real. Thus, realizing the Truth is beyond conceptions we have of the known and the knower as well, dispel the belief in external existence.

8. The Four Immeasurable Thoughts

- It is called immeasurable because the want for unlimited happiness is for all sentient beings and not just for a few loved ones.
- In terms of sequence of texts, equanimity comes at last but when we practice, it has to come first. First and foremost, we should have the eyes of equanimity, understanding that all sentient beings want happiness and does not want suffering, just like ourselves.

The four immeasurable thoughts are:

May all beings obtain happiness and be very happy
May all remain free from sorrow and the cause of sorrow
May all never be separated form authentic happiness
May all remain in a state of equanimity, free of attachment and aversion.

CALM ABIDING MEDITATION

9. Calm Abiding Meditation

- Merge your body, speech and mind with the Universal Truth
- Be in the 7 postures of meditation
- Make sure to keep your eyes open and breathe from the mouth
- Remember two things - Awareness and Non-fabrication.
- Don't fabricate your thoughts- let your mind be as it is but be conscious of its activities. Neither reject your thoughts nor accept them.
- Do not think of the past or reflect on it. Thinking of a past thought is an effort.
- Do not think of the future. Thinking of what you are going to do is also an effort.
- Whatever thoughts at the present, do not discriminate the thought as bad or good, do not analyse
- Do not grasp; do not take ownership of the thought.
- Do not label the thoughts - happiness, sadness, devotion, fear. Do not control your mind - it is more about letting go.
- Awareness is knowing when anger is rising in you, happiness is coming.
- Clinging on the happy thoughts is fabrication of mind. Awareness should let you know what you are feeling right now right at this moment.

DEDICATION

10. Dedication of Merit

At the end of this practice, dedicate the effort for the benefit of all beings.

These are the minimum basis of everyday practice. In order to develop inner transformation, daily practice is very much needed.
