

# **BET YERUSHA – AN ORDER OF GUARDIANS**

## **FOUNDATION TECHNIQUE ~ RECEPTIVE MEDITATION**

This work is an edited version of the works of the late Dr Michael Freedman, Senior Guardian of the Guardians of Grace Blessing and Sustenance® who wrote a series of lessons for the TM Meditative Research Foundation Inc.

We also acknowledge Prof John Raeburn of the Auckland School of Medicine and Dr John Hilton M.D for their honorary and contributory roles in the original production of this course for the TM Meditative Research Foundation Inc.

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Winter Solstice - 21 June 2017

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## **PART 1**

### **THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE FOUNDATION TECHNIQUE RECEPTIVE MEDITATION**

Our system of receptive meditation is a relaxing and a simple natural process that progressively improves the functioning of the physical system. In many circles this form of meditation is similar to what is known as Transcendental Meditation, but also very similar to techniques taught by modern Kabbalistic proponents of the Sephardic tradition such as Rabbi David Cooper.

Whenever you engage in any kind of physical or mental activity, some physiological stress is incurred. As soon as your body gains any kind of restfulness then some of the stress can be released. The greater the restfulness; the greater the release of stress.

If physiological stress is not soon released, it leads to fatigue. Then you have to work harder to get things done, and so you build up even more stress. There is nothing wrong with stress, in itself, as long as your system handles and dissolves it reasonably soon. But the accumulation in stress physiologically soon leads to mental stress and anxiety. You can build up too much stress from too much physical activity, or from too much mental activity, or from not getting enough rest. Remember that lying down worrying is not rest, for the brain uses up as much energy when it is working hard as the rest of the body put together.

The process of sleep, during which you alternate between deep sleep and vivid dreams, is the natural way of gaining rest and release of stress. During sleep, the restful state of the body enables the repair and recuperation systems of the body to work better. Some people regard dreams as the mental by product of the physiological recuperative processes. However, few people remember any, of their dreams, except occasionally those taking place immediately prior to waking up.

During the Foundation Technique the body slows down at least as much as it does after several hours of sleep. As a result, much stress is released, quite spontaneously and very easily. We find rest for the body and rest for the mind.

However, we do not always or even usually fall asleep. Your mind is engaged in simpler activity than it usually is when awake; and your body is more restful than it is usually when it is awake. Nor does it really matter if you doze off during meditation - for this is also good rest, but usually we should remain awake. And sometimes we find that we are both very restful and very alert simultaneously. Restful alertness is by experience very pleasant, and is more rewarding to both body and mind the more restful it becomes. It is possible to become completely alert and yet completely at rest.

Because restful alertness is rewarding to the system, it tends to be maintained after your session of meditation so that in your daily activities, you will begin to act more restfully than before, yet with greater awareness and alertness. All your daily activities begin to be achieved with more poise and less panic.

Continued regular practice of our meditation technique for no more than 20 minutes twice a day leads to a progressive improvement in the balance of the system. There are two divisions of the automatic nervous system in the body: one concerned with

activation and one concerned with recuperation. During receptive meditation, the body finds deep restfulness while maintaining a little mental activity without necessarily falling asleep. Thus the body begins to learn to balance its activation and recuperation responses better. All activities become progressively easier to do and are performed with greater clearness and awareness.

The expansion of awareness which many people report comes during the day, after their regular meditation sessions, is to be clearly distinguished from any temporary acceleration of awareness which comes from chemical stimulation, whether from tea or coffee or some other more potent drug perhaps. Expansion of awareness grows as the body becomes more capable of maintaining awareness, more and more clearly - and for more and more of the time. Full awareness is when maximum clearness of awareness can be maintained all of the time without effort or striving.

There are two significant results of regular practice of meditative relaxation. The gentle release of stress and strain with consequent benefits for health, and the increasing ability of the body to balance its various systems and responses to all the situations of life, so that the regular meditator begins to behave with more and more clarity of awareness and joy of living.

## **THE SIMPLER STATES OF THOUGHT**

The process of meditative relaxation is to allow your mind to experience the simpler states of thought enabling your body to become more restful while you maintain some mental alertness.

Let us make clear that we mean by “The simpler states of thought”. In the diagram are listed several quite ordinary human activities, arranged in order of busyness from very busy running and shouting’ to very easy, ‘sitting quietly with eyes closed’ - and beyond. The busy states are very complex, a great deal is going on in both body and mind, but as you move towards the more restful states, there is less and less going on; they are simpler, less complex. It has been found that if someone is busier, meditation, that oxygen consumption when they do less they burn up less oxygen. It has also been found that they will burn up more oxygen - than normal everyday activity or doing nothing. It has also been discovered that during meditation that oxygen consumption is less than when people just sit quietly ‘with their eyes closed.

So, whatever you do when you meditate; clearly your oxygen consumption will be much less than usual. Receptive meditation cannot involve anything as complex as ‘concentration’ for this would show up as increased oxygen consumption. Take it easy is our rule, therefore.

Many people in the past believed that it is not easy for ordinary folk to experience simpler states of consciousness and thought. Thus many tended to describe meditation in terms of effort, concentration and difficulty. As to the ‘No-Pain No-Gain’ motto, we completely dispute this. Such has been taught of old, because there had been a misunderstanding of the ordinary process of thinking, and the nature of attention. Receptive meditation depends only on what the simpler states of thought are, and on what the natural tendency of the attention is to do. Meditation depends on natural, spontaneous processes. So, any attempt to control these natural process of the mind is mistaken and a hindrance. The technique is to take it easy and take it as it comes.

## LEVELS OF HUMAN ACTIVITY

<b>RUNNING AND SHOUTING</b>	
<b>WALKING AND TALKING</b>	
<b>SITTING AND TALKING</b>	
<b>SITTING AND READING</b>	
<b>SITTING AND COGITATING</b> (eyes open)	
<b>SITTING WITH EYES CLOSED</b>	
<b>DAYDREAMING</b>	<b>FOUNDATION TECHNIQUE</b>
<b>DOZING</b> (losing consciousness)	<b>SIIMPLER &amp; SIMPLER</b>
<b>SLEEPING</b> (unconscious)	<b>MORE AND MORE ABSTRACT</b>
<b>DREAMING</b> (not conscious)	<b>MORE AND MORE RESTFUL</b>
<b>DEEP SLEEP</b>	<b>MORE AND MORE WAKEFUL</b>
	<b>RESTFULLY ALERT</b>
	<b>COMPLETE RESTFULNESS</b>
	<b>COMPLETE ALERTNESS</b>
	<b>PURE AWARENESS</b>

The natural tendency of the attention is to be moving all the time, and usually it flows freely and spontaneously towards any experience that offers greater interest or pleasure. The attention needs to be controlled only if it is to be held on some thought or experience. The state of both body and mind, when they are at rest, is found by experience to be very pleasant. Because our meditation technique, is to turn the attention towards simpler states of thought, and thus in the direction of restfulness, meditators find the way increasingly easy, as they drift in that direction.

Whatever the state of the person, whether they are intellectually inclined or emotionally developed or not; everyone finds that their attention will drift through the simpler stages of thinking. The process is not merely easy, it is completely natural. Just as water flows down a slope, the attention flows along to experience simpler and simpler thinking all by itself. Once you have started, the rest of the process is quite spontaneous, as long as you take it all as it comes.

## THE OBJECT OF ATTENTION

We start the process with the memory of a continuous, harmonious meaningless verbal sound, which is thus simpler than most words we know. This is the vehicle of relaxation.

We call it a vehicle because it carries us. We do not have to use any effort at all. There are many technical terms, in various languages, for such verbal sounds, words or syllables, appropriate for use in meditation. These include havarah, wird, word and mantra. However none of these terms is adequate, in their normal use, to describe the vehicle of attention in receptive meditation. Therefore, we usually use the term 'the Sound' or 'your Sound.'

Sounds used by people who do our Receptive Meditation share the following properties:

1. They are meant to be meaningless, for their purpose is to be simpler than any words that have some meaning.
2. They are pleasing and harmonious to the ear, for it has been shown that pleasant sounds used in the way we do in meditation to aid relaxation, while unpleasant sounds hinder it.
3. The sounds used in Receptive Meditation have been found by the experience of many years to have a good effect on people using them over long periods. There are certain sounds that appear to be suitable only for recluses, monks, people who wish to withdraw completely from the world; or to lose interest in the normal relationships and activities of life.

People who learn our technique of Receptive Meditation are taught only such sounds as have been found, by experience, to have a positive effect, in leading to more interest and enjoyment in life, and an overall improvement in ones everyday relationships with other people.

4. The sounds work better when kept silent than when spoken aloud. Therefore, you should never say your sound aloud again, once you have learned it - even to yourself. This is not a matter of secrecy or mystery. It is far quite practical reasons, which you will realise one you, have learnt and begun to practice our technique of meditation.

## **WE DO NOT EMPTY OUR MINDS**

There is a widespread myth concerning meditation, that it involves emptying the mind of all thought. To try to empty the mind of all thoughts generally, does not lead to any more restful state. Even if an attempt to clear the mind or empty it of thoughts were to be successful, you would have only managed to stop (momentarily) your surface thinking. Further, on top of any mental activity, or superficial emptiness, you would have still superimposed the effort of holding your mind still and driving away any thought that arose.

The ongoing mental chatter, both at conscious and subconscious levels are extremely busy. Unless you are able to exercise quietness, restfulness for a reasonable amount of time such as a retreat or sabbatical, then the day-to-day intrusions upon your mind will make the technique of 'Emptying' your mind extremely difficult.

Do you see that this is a very complex mental activity, the activity and process of attempting to empty the mind when your life is surrounded by mental intrusions is neither simple nor restful?

Though it may sometime leads to mental exhaustion, which some people mistake for a clear mind. The meditation technique carefully avoids such exhausting and dulling processes.

Our technique uses the free flowing nature of attention to enjoy more restfulness in a completely natural way. You just allow your attention to bring your body and mind to a restful and meditative alertness spontaneously and without interference.

Do you see, even our receptive technique is in a sense also attentive and alert and strengthens concentration. But it does it quietly, slowly and gently. In contrast a superficially empty mind is no different from a state of unconsciousness. And this you can have anytime, if you like, when you go to sleep!

## **SOME PRACTICAL POINTS**

A few more practical points on meditation that you should know at this time.

1. The proper posture for meditation is to sit comfortably with your eyes closed. We do not lie down, for this might encourage sleepiness, nor do we stay sitting bolt upright for this would be uncomfortable, discouraging restfulness. We just sit comfortably in a chair or on the floor or mat but with our buttocks well back in the chair, or against the wall, so that you have full support. If you like, take off your shoes; but this does not matter one way or another, as long as you are comfortable. A few people like to support their head with a cushion. As it does not matter a great deal if you let your head fall forward during meditation, you can do this or not as you like.

The rule is 'Sit Comfortably'.

2. You should sit with your eyes closed so that your attention goes more easily to your sound- the vehicle of your meditation and you are not divided between your meditation and the sight of whatever is going on around you. If your eyes open during the meditation, just gently close them again. You do not have to hold them tight. Just be comfortable.

3. It is important to note that we do not recommend holding your breath. There are no special techniques of breathing to be done within our Receptive Meditation technique. We do not try to control or regulate breathing. It usually slows down, because, during meditative relaxation, all the bodily functions are slowing down, but you do not have to try to slow down your breathing. Just as during normal activity, you do meditation without giving any thought to your breathing at all.

4. Regular practice of the Receptive Meditation technique is vital to gain full benefit from it. Twice a day for 20 - 30 minutes is all that is needed.

5. The simplicity, the easiness of our meditation technique is a vital part of the process. Any effort of striving or anticipation will only slow down the process and hinder the benefits. We simply sit comfortably with eyes closed, for 15 or 20 minutes twice a day. We take it easy - and we take it as it comes.

## PART 2

In a few moments, you will begin to learn how to do our Receptive Meditation technique. It is most important, that you understand, right from the beginning, that in this technique, any kind of effort trying to do something or trying to get somewhere is a hindrance to the process.

We just sit quietly, with eyes closed, and take it ALL as it comes. Whenever you do meditation, the important thing is to sit comfortably. This means let your chair give you full support. If you like take off your shoes, and put a cushion behind your head. There is no especial virtue in sitting bolt upright in some cross legged position - unless this is what you find most comfortable. The rule is 'Sit Comfortably'. If your head falls forward doing the meditation, it doesn't matter. You can easily lift it up again, if you wish. But take it easy that is what is important.

With this chapter is an email address. Send an email to the address and you will receive by return message a meaningless verbal sound (we call it 'the sound'), which will be appropriate for you to use whenever you do your meditation. When you come to see it, you will notice that it has two syllables and is meaningless. At first, murmur it to yourself, over and over again, until you feel that you are saying it smoothly and gently. As soon as you are saying it over and over again, so gently and so smoothly that it is all running together, so that you hardly know where it begins or where it ends. Begin to say it, over and over again, more softly and more quickly -- until it is just a whisper and you are whispering it as fast as you can. This might take half a minute or so. There is no hurry.

It should be so fast and so soft that it is as easy to whisper it on your in-breath as it is on your out- breath - a very fast and very gentle repetition of the sound.

When it is flowing smoothly and just a gentle whisper, close your eyes and begin to think it. Not worrying if other thoughts also come along. There is no need to say it or whisper it aloud again, now that you have learned it.

Sit quietly, gently thinking the sound over and over again for 4 or 5 minutes. When you feel 4 or 5 minutes have passed, open your eyes and go the next section on meditation. Do not worry too much about the time - when you feel 4 or 5 minutes have passed, open your eyes and go on to the next part of the series on meditation.

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## PART 3

**Read the next section only after you have had 4 or 5 minutes sitting quietly with your eyes closed, using your sound provided by return email.**

While you have been meditating, during the past 4 to 6 minutes you have probably have noticed a little relaxation, not much, just a little. You may also have noticed that your sound was beginning to change. Maybe it went slower or perhaps faster, or perhaps it changed in some other way?

**THIS IS GOOD.** We do not try to make the sound go in any particular way. We do not try to make it go-fast, or try to make it go slow; or try to keep it the same. It seems to want to go along on its own. Even when it seems to fade away or disappear, we do not try to keep it going. We let it disappear.

Probably, you noticed that other thoughts were coming along. Perhaps you found that your attention had gone off on to some outside noise or physical sensation?

**THIS IS GOOD.** Other thoughts, other things, are all part of this process of the foundation meditation. We never try to control the situation in anyway during foundation meditation. This technique is not the same as a concentration technique.

**WHAT WE DO IS.** Whenever you notice that your attention has gone on to anything else, bring your sound to mind and go along with that again. Take it all as it comes.

Thinking your sound does not have to be clear in your mind. It is just a memory, of your sound, going along over and over again. And then, when you notice that you are thinking about something else, just simply return again to your sound...and gently return... and gently return... and take it as it comes.

This time, you should meditate for about 20 to 30 minutes. You never say your sound aloud again however. Just bring it to mind going along over and over again. If you feel you have forgotten, look at it again to refresh your memory before you close your eyes.

**NEVER WORRY ABOUT THE TIME.** If you are not sure when 20 to 30 minutes is up; you may simply have a glance at your watch or clock.

**NEVER SET AN ALARM.** It doesn't matter if you open your eyes to check the time. But always close them again until you have finished. Now, close your eyes. Return your sound to mind and continue with another 20 minutes or so of meditation.



## **PART 4**

You probably noticed that many thoughts came along while you were using your sound during meditation. In our technique, the outside noises you hear or the thoughts that come along are no nuisance. They are all part of the process. Whenever you notice that your attention has gone from your sound on to anything else, just gently bring your sound to mind, going along repeatedly, and take it all as it comes. In the next lesson, you will learn how they thoughts come, why they come, and the benefits they bring when they come.

### **AN IMPORTANT INSTRUCTION**

Between this lesson and subsequent lesson, you should have one or two session of the meditation, each of 15 or 20 minutes. It is very important that you do not get up too quickly after these sessions. If you can, lie down for a few minutes after each session. This is very important.

### **THE LENGTH OF THE MEDITATION SESSIONS**

You should meditate for 15 to 20 minutes twice a day. The minimum time is 15 minutes, for you need about 10 minutes to settle down in any session and from 5 to 10 minutes at that restful level to gain good benefit from doing the technique. If you have been referred to meditation by a health professional, then it should certainly be nearer 20 minutes than 15 minutes. But there is no need to do more than 20 minutes twice a day. That is quite enough.

### **HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOU HAVE DONE TWENTY MINUTES?**

It is quite simple. Open your eyes and have a look at your watch or clock. If you have done less than 20 minutes, close your eyes again and continue. If you have done near enough to 20 minutes, then you can either finish or move onto the listening stage, or continue meditating - it is up to you.

But, it is very important that you do not set an alarm. Such a loud noise is very disturbing when it is close to you, and it is not necessary, as you can always glance at the time while you are doing meditation. Remember we take it as it comes.

### **WHAT ARE THE BEST TIMES FOR MEDITATION?**

It is very important that you work out your own schedule. You do not have to meditate at the same times every day, but it is a good idea to arrange your timetable so that meditation has its place a couple of times each day.

The best times to do it are probably before breakfast and before the evening meal, but these are just the best times. Work out the times that suit your daily program. The general rule is: At the beginning and end of the working day. Shift workers or parents looking after children may have to fit it in as best they can. Parents of children may find it best to do it in mid-morning, after you have got them off to school; and in mid-afternoon, before they come home again.

Work out the times that suit you best – twice a day for 15 or 20 minutes.

## **SITTING COMFORTABLY WITH EYES CLOSED**

We leave our eyes closed during our meditations. If they open, or if you want to see the time, then just close them again. It is important to sit comfortably. This means let your chair give you full support, with your buttocks well back on the seat and sitting reasonably upright. If you like, put a cushion behind the head, so you can lean back and not worry about your head falling back, as your neck muscles relax. Many people do this. It does not matter if your head sinks down on your chest. You can lift it up again or leave it there, as you like. Most people take their shoes off when they meditate, simply for added comfort and better energy flow. However it doesn't matter if you prefer to leave them on.

It is not a good idea to cross your knees when doing meditation, as your foot tends to go to sleep.

## **YOU SHOULD NOT LIE DOWN TO DO MEDITATION – EXCEPT WHEN YOU ARE ILL**

Despite the emphasis on comfort, you should not lie down to do meditation. This is because meditation when lying down can cause sleep. While the purpose of meditation is to train you to reach higher states of consciousness they will also indirectly help you to concentrate.

Meditation also relaxes the body. An aspect of meditation is to train your body to become relaxed, not only when asleep but is while engaged in daily activities. The way we do it is to encourage meditative relaxation, but not to encourage sleep. It does not matter if you do doze off during your session of meditation, the training process takes time. Most people doze during meditation from time to time, and this is good. But we sit, not lay down, so that the body does not automatically doze off when it relaxes.

The aim of the Foundation Technique is to be able to do all your usual activities, while you remain at ease and on top of things, or so that you can recuperate quickly when things are going wrong, or you are under stress. This is what is meant by 'More poise and less panic'. Anyone can be relaxed while they are asleep; your body is now going to be trained to be relaxed while you are awake and active.

So, you should accept sleep if it happens while you are sitting comfortably meditating – but you should not go out of your way to encourage it. If you are sick in bed, of course, it does not matter if you doze off during meditation, for such deep, relaxed sleep is very beneficial when you are ill.

## **WHEN SHOULD YOU NOT MEDITATE?**

It is not a good idea to do the Foundation Technique too soon after a heavy meal, as you tend to feel a little uncomfortable or too sleepy to get maximum benefit. Wait for an hour or two after meals. It may not take so long for your stomach to settle down after a light meal or snack. It is better to do it after a meal than to miss it.

You should not do the Foundation Technique just before going to sleep. Usually, after meditation you will find that you begin to feel brighter and fresher some 5 or 10 minutes

later. This is not the way to go to sleep. You will be taught in a later lesson, the proper techniques to use just before going to sleep to assist you to get to sleep more readily and enjoy a deep refreshing sleep.

## **REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

For how many minutes did you do meditation?

Did you feel it was easy to do meditation?

Did it seem peaceful?

Did you feel like laughing or smiling during meditation?

Did you feel sleepy during meditation?

Do you feel sleepy now, after meditation?

Did you notice the sound changing during meditation?

Was the sound going faster, or slower?

Did your sound make any other changes?

Did you notice many thoughts coming through during meditation?

Did you feel the thoughts were a nuisance?

Did you notice outside noises during meditation?

There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. These are questions for your own reflection now and after future sessions to reflect on your experiences and progress. Some aspects will be discussed in further detail in later lessons.

## **PART 5 (A)**

**Before you go ahead with your next Part, you should have had at least a couple of meditations of 15 to 20 minutes each. If you have not, then some meditation now, for 15 to 20 minutes; THEN go ahead.**

Many people forget their sound, when they are first learning to do the meditation. This is good. Forgetting your sound is a sign of good use of the sound. Not everyone forgets their sound, of course, but if you are using it properly then you are certainly not doing anything helping you remember it.

During meditation, we do not concentrate on the sound, nor even think it clearly. It is just an idea, a gentle memory, going along over and over again. If it fades away we do not try to keep it going. Even when we seem to forget it we do not try to remember it. So if during the first few days, quite a few people forget their sound, it is no great surprise. But you can always refresh your memory if you feel you have forgotten it.

It is in the nature of the sounds to change but we do not deliberately change the sound on the one hand, nor do we try to keep the sound constant. We just bring it to mind the way we learned it and take it all as it comes. It is very fluid and flexible. This is why we do not say it aloud once we have learned it- to leave it free to be as flexible and fluid and volatile as it wishes. The important thing is to take it all as it comes.

Do not fuss too much over your sound. If you have completely forgotten it, refresh your memory from the written copy. But experienced meditators bring it to mind the way they first learned it, and then let it make whatever changes it likes during any meditation session. It can be fast or slow, long or short, the emphasis can be on one syllable or another. It can seem to be backwards even sometimes - after all it is just a gentle memory.

## **THOUGHTS COMING DURING MEDITATION**

You should understand why thoughts come along during meditation. It is the usual experience that wherever there is a greater chance of pleasantness or interest that your attention will go to it. Your attention is like a radar beam scanning the field of experience. When there is nothing much of interest, it keeps on moving about, but when there is something for it to enjoy, then it will settle down to stay there. During meditation your attention is supposed to go to simpler stages of thought which are reported to be more pleasant than ordinary surface thought, so the question arises: when your attention has gone to such a pleasant state of restfulness, why does it come away towards ordinary surface thinking?

What has happened when you are sitting quietly paying attention to the memory of your sound - and then you notice that you have forgotten all about it, and have been thinking about something else. Every mental experience has a corresponding physical activity. When you see a friend, there is a lot of activity in the nervous system to enable you to see your friend. When you listen to the radio, there is a lot of physical activity, such as the eardrums vibrating so that you can have the mental experience of hearing. When you are experiencing the simpler stages of thinking, there is a corresponding simplicity or lessening of activity in the nervous system, which is a very pleasant and restful state. Rest for the body and rest for the mind.

When the whole system is resting in a state of meditation, the very restfulness enables some of the stress and tension in the body to begin to loosen up and unwind. Often it is the physiological activity of recuperation, the very activity of relaxing itself which disturbs the restfulness. The physiological activity of recuperation and relaxation must have some corresponding mental activity. However during meditation relaxation and thoughts are produced by the physiological activity of loosening and unwinding stress and releasing tensions. This is probably a similar process as that which takes place during sleep. During sleep dreams last from 10 to 20 minutes. We do not interfere with them, because we are unconscious at the time. Just like that, we do not interfere when a stream of thought has come along during meditation.

Our technique is: as soon as you notice that some thoughts have come along, gently return to the memory of your sound, and take it all as it comes. Just as when you have had a dream vivid enough to wake you up, the best thing that you can do is return to sleep, so that the restfulness and recuperation of the sleep process can continue with minimal interference.

Meditation is a completely natural process, which we describe as mental restfulness and indirectly as a gentle process of developing mental awareness. During meditation, when some unwinding has taken place and the attention has been engaged with some thoughts instead of being on the sound, and then we gently return to the memory of the sound and pay attention to that again. That is all that we do. To try and block thoughts or empty your mind would be to interfere with a very natural process of great benefit to both body and mind. It does not matter whether your attention has gone off on to some thought or some feeling, some outside noise by some physical sensation, we treat them all alike we do not take very much notice of any of them and just gently bring the memory of our sound to mind and take it all as it comes. This is the technique, which we use for our meditation.

The quality of the thoughts can be of any kind. It does not make any difference. Whether they are good thoughts or bad thoughts happy thoughts or sad thoughts peaceful thoughts or angry thoughts, we treat them all alike. As soon as we notice that our attention is on thoughts instead of the sound; again, we then bring the sound to mind, and let it all happen all over again. Most of the thoughts that come along during meditation are best described as trivial.

### **Whatever comes I welcome, it helps me on my Way**

The sound is just a neutral centering point. Less complicated than a word with meaning and also rather relaxing in itself. So we keep our minds neutral towards the thoughts and do not take any notice of what they are about or what they feel like. We do not analyze thoughts, any more than you analyze a dream while you are having it. If you wish to analyze your thoughts, do this after the session of meditation has ended. We just take the thoughts as they come and gently return to the memory of the sound.

So we are never disturbed by the thoughts that come into the mind. The question of their negative or positive nature never really arises. Every thought is a signal that stress has been relieved and is now gone. When the system clearer, then we can enjoy life more fully and experience the joy and creativity of life more clearly.

The process is a cycle: paying attention to the sound - some restfulness - some release of stress -consequently, some thoughts coming along -- then noticing the thoughts then, only this we do: gently return to the sound to begin to the cycle all over again. Any stage of the cycle can be as long or as short as it likes. The experienced meditator may stay on their sound longer, or may have longer periods of restfulness; but certainly the experienced meditator has many more thoughts which go on for a much longer time before they are noticed, than does the new meditator. Experienced people know when they are on the sound, and they know when they are not on the sound, and that is about it.

Take it easy is the rule. Often when people first begin meditation, they just do not know how much effort they have been putting into everything they do. This particularly applies to people who have been doing other kinds active or concentration types of meditation. Or are learned in some field of psychology or mysticism. They feel they do not need much instruction, so they read the lesson but do not take much notice of what is taught. Such people do not immediately get the knack of our form of meditation. This is so easy that children learn it the fastest.

Many people, when they learn our technique of receptive meditation, because they never have before come across the idea of using a meaningless verbal sound as an object of attention, feel that doing our meditation is simply repeating the sound. Not so, doing our foundation meditation is **returning** to the sound, whenever you notice that you are not paying attention to it. It is the returning that is important. You cannot return unless you have lost it. And you cannot return until you notice you have lost it. So, just take it as it comes.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The next step in your practical instruction is to learn how to start and finish the meditation.

Sit comfortably now, as though you are going to meditate, but you needn't start yet, just close your eyes for a minute or so.

### **DO NOT GO AHEAD UNTIL YOU HAVE SAT QUIETLY WITH EYES CLOSED FOR ONE OR TWO MINUTES.**

You have been sitting quietly with eyes closed for a couple of minutes. Probably you would have noticed some thoughts coming along in your mind.

Perhaps you were wondering what you would read next in your lesson.

Perhaps you were noticing some noises in your room.

Maybe your sound began to come along in your mind.

All these kind of things are thoughts.

You did not have to do anything to have thoughts coming along in your mind. Thoughts, sensations, memories and so on come along each of their own accord, without any effort

on your part.

What we have been doing in the past couple of minutes is letting you experience what **ORDINARY THINKING** is. Ordinary thinking is just thoughts and sensations coming along in your mind quite effortlessly and spontaneously. **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DO ANYTHING TO HAVE ORDINARY THINKING.**

Our method of meditation is just ordinary thinking. It is not some kind of special thinking. It is introducing the memory of your sound into the ordinary process of thinking.

Now this time when you close your eyes, sit comfortably for half a minute or so with your eyes closed. If you notice some thoughts coming along, then quite gently and easily bring your sound to mind, going along over and over again. Or, if your sound seems to come along of its own accord, then just go along with it and take it all as it comes for 15 or 20 minutes.

Whenever you notice that your attention has wandered off on to something else, bring your sound to mind and go along with that again.

When you want to finish your meditation after 15 or 20 minutes, then do not get up, or even open your eyes, for another couple of minutes. It doesn't matter whether your sound is there or not, just continue to sit quietly with your eyes closed for a couple of minutes. In this way you slide into meditation and slide out of meditation, instead of jumping in and out. It makes the whole process of meditation much easier and much more beneficial.

### **NOW CLOSE YOUR EYES AND MEDITATE FOR 15 or 20 MINUTES**

If you have had 15 or 20 minutes of meditation, you should go on to read the second of the two lectures with this lesson "Why we do what we do" – with its accompanying diagram. It takes the information about the processes of thinking which occur during meditation a step further.

## **PART 5 (B)**

### **WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO**

The Restful Alertness which you have experienced during meditation has, most likely, only been only a momentary experience. You may of have found, that you settled down to restfulness but you also have come away quickly. It is said that the attention is drawn to simpler stages of thought by pleasantness found increasing at every more restful level. So why does it leave an area of more restfulness to return to an area of less restfulness? It is because the system is not- used to being at such very restful levels. With practice, the system does become used to being at such restful levels. For example, your breathing becomes gentler and that your heart rate slows down, during meditation.

Meditation is an alternation of increasing restfulness with increasing activity. Your body becomes so much more restful that recuperative processes can begin to take place. If there were no need for recuperation or repair, there would be no need for the body to lose its restfulness. The movement and activity in the physiological recuperative systems is what causes the loss of restfulness. But this that brings about the changes and improvements in both body and mind for both daily living.

All the thoughts and feelings that spring up during meditation are the mental accompaniment to the physiological recuperation that is taking place as a result of deep restfulness during meditation. So whether your attention is on the sound and you are settling to restfulness; or whether it is on some thoughts or feelings and recuperative processes are taking place. Either way, your system is being improved and your body is being trained to maintain increasing levels of recuperation and relaxation, while engaged in ordinary daily activities.

Many thoughts during meditation can be a sign that the ability of your mind is improving. During meditation, the technique takes you to simpler, more restful states, and then some thoughts seem to disrupt the restfulness and take the attention off on to what seems to be a flow of mental activity. The longer that flow goes on before you notice that you are paying attention to it instead of to your sound, the longer your mind has been active, without going to sleep, at that very restful level. Mental activity while the body is much more restful than it usually is when awake, trains your body and your mind to act more restfully and with more sensitivity during your activities. The sound takes you to restfulness, but thoughts, up until the time when you notice them, train your mind and body to act more restfully.

What we do is, when we notice the thoughts, gently and easily we bring the sound to mind again and pay attention to the memory of the sound going along over and over again. This way, we gain the benefit of deep relaxation while staying awake. However, if we do go to sleep, it is very good, especially during the early months of doing meditation. As this means that we are gaining that kind of restfulness, also needed by the body for recuperation and repair.

Some people notice that they seem to doze and dream during meditation. This is acceptable; and as soon as your body is able, it will begin to maintain your wakefulness and return to the gentle concentration on the sound. While the thoughts go along, and while your body is relaxed and restful. It does not matter how it happens: your body and mind will do what is needed; as long as you do not interfere with the process by trying to



empty your mind or imagine some state of tranquility or transcendence. Doing this will only disturb your meditation even more.

Tranquility or Transcendence can only be allowed to happen naturally as the soul develops. Such things as this cannot be imagined or striven after with effort. However your body and mind will achieve such restful alertness, which is necessary for mystical awareness' such as transcendence; providing you allow such to carry out its recuperation and repair processes without interference.

Some people might begin to think that they should stay on the thoughts. They are told how useful thoughts are, so they begin to wonder why they should return to the sound. Why not stay on the thoughts and enjoy them or, if they are about some problem or worries, why not try to work them out during meditation? But - we never do this, we always return to the sound as soon as we notice the thoughts.

So what happens during meditation? We start the sound gently and it takes you to some degree of restfulness, when one of three things happens:

1. You might just rest there for a moment or so. Little physical activity, little mental activity, just a restful alertness. You won't notice it at the time, but later you realise that you have been very restful indeed.
2. You might doze off into a dreamy sleep for a few minutes. This is good. Don't try to stay awake, just be glad that this kind of rest has taken place.
3. No sooner does your body reach some restfulness, than the processes of releasing stress begin quite spontaneously with an accompanying stream of thoughts. At this stage, when you notice it has happened you should return to your sound. But what happens if you do not return and stay on the thoughts?

The sound takes you to a simple dreamlike state. Once you notice the thoughts, you have left the simplest state, for there is not only the stream of thought, but also you are noticing two things, thoughts PLUS awareness of thoughts. If you stay on the thoughts the situation continues to become more and more complex, as you begin to notice what kind of thoughts they are, and whether they are pleasant or unpleasant. This is not different from the ordinary complex states of thinking hard or worrying, and there is no restfulness in these, nor any recuperation – besides, they are usually less pleasant than the dreamy, restful states achieved when you do meditation properly. Quite different from the ordinary hassle of complex surface thinking.

If you stay on the thoughts, you risk one of two things happening. Either the thoughts are very flattering, in which case you go on some ego-trip; or the thoughts are unpleasant, in which case you might begin to brood and think. Perhaps you will feel that meditation is no good; because you just sit there feeling bad with the same worrying thoughts you have had in the past? No, just gently return to your sound, which is neutral and is able to restore you to deep restfulness and allow your body and mind to achieve integration. Only this we do, but always this we do it, whenever you notice your attention has gone on to anything else, gently bring your sound to mind and take it all as it comes. This is the formula to success.

## **REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

How many times have you done the meditation since your first session?

For about how long did you meditate each time?

During the meditation, did the time seem to pass quickly?

Did you feel that thoughts were a nuisance?

Did you feel that outside noises was a nuisance during meditation?

Did you notice any change in your breathing during meditation?

Was it faster, slower, deeper, shallow or steadier?

Did you lie down after each session of meditation?

Did you fall asleep while you were lying down?

Did you remember your sound or did you need to refresh your memory of it?

## **PART 6**

You cannot test meditation by anything that happens during meditation. You can only test meditation by what difference it makes to your daily life and activities.

During meditation feelings are not a reliable guide. You can have any kind of feeling or thought during meditation, as your brain ticks over while your body is settling down into restfulness. Naturally, because you are meditating, some of the thoughts and feelings will be about meditating itself. Casual feelings and thoughts that come into the mind tend attach them to whatever is handiest, in this case, what you happen to be doing – meditation. You happen to feel good, so you feel good about the meditation. You happen to feel bad, so ... During meditation, we pay no attention to the content of the thoughts and feelings. Just noticing that they are there, we gently bring the sound to mind. We are sitting quietly daydreaming, not pondering or analyzing, just casually daydreaming – and any kinds of thoughts can come along while you are daydreaming.

We never take any notice of any feelings of 'depth' we might or might not have. Many people say that the 'deepest meditation' they have ever had was their first. Feelings of 'deepness' and 'shallowness' are mainly a matter of contrast. Your muscles have been tight; now they are looser; you hand feel heavy, something like that. So you say 'I was very deep'. But the more experienced meditator is used to feeling relaxed, so they do not have these feelings of depth and much as the newer meditator. It is like a swimming pool, which seems very deep for the toddler - but for their parents it is not so very deep.

Any feelings you might have during meditation are not a reliable guide to how it is going, therefore, the only way left to test meditation is to see what happens during the day. If you feel reasonably fresh during the day, if your relationships with other people are reasonably good, if whatever psychosomatic problem such as migraines or blood pressure seems to be improving, then your practice of meditation must be going all right.

During meditation, whatever happens is the right happening. Moreover, learning that this is indeed true is principle knack of getting the most benefit.

### **WHY DON'T WE SAY THE SOUND ALOUD?**

Most people by now will have begun to realise why we do not say our sounds aloud. From practice you would have experienced how your sound is changing all the time. Sometimes it is fast and sometimes slow. Sometimes it is long and sometimes short. Sometimes the emphasis is on one syllable and sometimes it is on other. The sound can even seem to turn itself around or become inside out. What were one or two syllables may become one syllable...all the time it is moving and changing...and this is the way it should be. If you were to say the sound aloud however, it probably would be the same as when you first learned it. Many people make too much fuss over the sound. All it is, is just a neutral, meaningless, centering point, to which you return whenever you happen to notice that your attention has gone off on to something else.

In any case, the experienced meditator always has much more ability to quietly and efficiently meditate without getting involved in whatever thought processes or noticing whether the sound or thoughts there are. They usually have their thoughts going on for very long periods, without ever noticing the sound. In addition, this is very good it is a

sign of a mature meditator who is doing very beneficial meditation.

We want the sound to be free and come and go as it happens. If you were to start to say your sound aloud, then you would only set it like concrete, instead of leaving it free and flexible and volatile.

Perhaps you are beginning to realise what we call the sound, is not the some little word which you are repeating over and over again, but a continuous and flexible verbal vibration, the memory of which is going on repeatedly; and to which you are paying attention - or just remembering.

What you might call 'my sound' is just one cycle of that continuous flow. So you can never say your sound aloud, because you would not even know where to start or finish it. We want the sounds to be as flexible, volatile, and dynamic as possible. So we leave them as free flowing flexible, silent thoughts or memories.

Experienced meditators know when they are on their sound and they know when they are not on their sound. That is about all they usually know, even if they bother to think about it. The sound has no particular shape for the very experienced meditator who never says the sound aloud.

There are sounds for everyone. In this course all begin with the same sound, yet the sound changes to suit the meditator. What is important about your sound is the correct easy way of using it, without effort or control. Just gently bringing it to mind whenever you notice that you have gone off on to anything else - just take it all as it comes.

Just take it as it comes. Our attitude towards meditation should always be that:

No expectation leads to no effort;

No comparison leads to no watching;

No analysis leads to no brooding;

Twenty to thirty minutes twice a day -, meditate and then forget about it.

This is the best attitude for everyone to take towards mediation. Meditation is like brushing your teeth after every meal, but nobody makes a big fuss about it or compares one tooth brushing with another or analysis out of a whole lot of things about tooth brushing. They do it, two or three times a day and forget about it...and get a lot of benefit from it.

## **NO EXPECTATION LEADS TO NO EFFORT**

If you begin to expect this experience or that, you will begin to try to achieve it or push your mind into some so-called deep state or other. Even if it were a worthwhile thing to try to do, it would take effort and effort is a very complex activity, which uses a lot of energy and only holds your attention at the surface. You would lose the restful states on the one hand and perhaps strain your mind the other hand. At best, you would probably only imagine that you have achieved something.

There is no greater impediment to benefit from meditation than effort. Take it easy. If, at any time, you are not sure whether you are doing your meditation correctly, take the easiest, the laziest way that is most likely to be right.

We say 'Take it easy. Do not use too much effort. Be more lazy and casual about your practice of meditation.

You have heard the saying: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." What we say is 'If at first you don't succeed, you must have been trying too hard, so take it a little easier."

Effort, concentration, control - contrary to the teachings of the Ages, I say that all these things can only bring failure.

Those who advocate effort or concentration does not know what they are talking about, but rather have just parroted the traditions of the past. Or else they are aiming for very different ends than magicians who take up meditation in order to build a good foundation for their practice and for their daily living and normal, healthy activities in the world.

Moreover, relaxation is effortless; this means, do not even try to make it effortless.

## **NO COMPARISON LEADS TO NO WATCHING**

Firstly, we never compare one session of meditation with another.

What any session will seem like will depend entirely on your physical state when you begin, whether you are tired, fresh, or fidgety or excited or worried - every session will be different.

Secondly, never compare your sessions with those of any other person. If you start to discuss what is happening in your sessions with someone else, or listen to some other foolish person talk about their meditations, it can all be spoiled in several ways. Either we will describe some marvelous thing that happened in their meditation, and then you will start to wish for it, or look for it during your sessions and that will inevitably lead to effort. Or they will talk about some horrible thing that happened in their sessions, and you will start to be afraid that something so horrible will happen during your sessions of meditation. It doesn't matter what happens during meditation, and, any way, the less that happens during meditation is the right happening so take it as it all comes.

## **NO ANALYSIS LEADS TO NO BROODING**

We do not bother to analyse the thoughts that come along during meditation. The fact that thoughts have come is significant - it means some stresses are being released. But what they are about is of no more importance, than the many thoughts that constantly pass through your mind during the 95% of dreams that you never remember.

Everything that happens during meditation, we treat in exactly the same way. As soon as we notice that our attention has gone on to anything else, gently we bring our sound to mind. Analysis of the thoughts that come along is quite unnecessary to gain benefits from meditation. The process of laboriously recalling past events or unpleasantness so far from relieving someone from stress, sometimes only increases their suffering, for now, in addition to the original traumatic experience, there is now the added stress of being forced to remember in details the unpleasantness.

Our meditation is a very innocent process for we find that all the stress of our

experience. Whether such is superficial or deeply entrenched, is very gently eliminated at the physical level without recourse to dwelling on some past unhappiness with some past pleasantness that is also now long gone.

Analysis of why this thought came along or why that feeling came along during meditation can only lead to brooding and suffering - instead achieve a clearer and more sensitive meditative mind. Such analytical brooding only brings clouds into the mind and an increasing tendency to preoccupation with the past. Every moment to live a life of enjoyment of reality, here and now. So we don't bother with then and there, or with soon and maybe. Don't concern yourself with what might happen in tomorrow's meditation session. Do not concern yourself with what is going on in someone else's sessions. Don't concern yourself with what happened 10 or 15 years ago... or even yesterday or this morning. The enjoyment of life is nearer than the nearest – it is here and now. Life is here. Enjoyment is now.

So take it easy during our meditation for twenty minutes twice a day – then forget about it!

### THREE WAYS THE SOUND WORKS

One aspect of the meditation, which has many people concerned, is our use of a meaningless verbal sound as an object of attention. Furthermore, we do not say the sounds aloud once we have learned them, nor is there any publicly published scheme or list of sounds. Unfortunately many mystical traditions which make use of verbal sounds (mantras, havaroth, wirts etc..) talk about them in terms of supernatural and mystical belief.

The reasons we do not say the sounds aloud are given during the third day lectures. We do not publish any list of sounds nor any scheme for composing the sounds because there is empirical evidence that once a sound is established with proper use over a few weeks, it is not advisable to switch to another. Teachers and those professional researchers with whom we discuss the sounds can understand that they are confidential.

The following brief points are based on empirical observation and scientific research.

1. **THE SOUND ITSELF LEADS TO A RESTFUL STATE.** All sounds used by those people who teach this form of meditation are chosen to be pleasing and harmonious to the ear.
2. **THE EASY, LAZY, CASUAL WAY WE USE THE SOUND IS IMPORTANT.** If you use your sound too vigorously or effortful then no matter what its shape it can have little restful effect. The method of teaching ensures that people do not start to use the sound with too much effort. Hence our emphasis on “bringing to mind”; “gently returning”; “bringing your sound to mind when you notice you have lost it”; “we use the sound to lose the sound”; “What you are really doing is just sitting there day dreaming, and whenever it occurs to you, bringing your sound to mind” By using the sound in this way, you ensure that whatever its effect will be maintained. The sounds are also selected to be meaningless. This is to provide a neutral point to which to return whenever you notice you are getting caught up in your thoughts. Sometimes some association gets attached to a sound, but we don't take any notice – and just return to the sound itself.

3. **YOUR SOUND BECOMES A POWERFUL DISCRIMINATIVE STIMULUS FOR RELAXATION**, once you have used it properly for even a few weeks. In other words, your body has become trained to recognize the sound as a signal for its relaxation and recuperation. Because the memory of your particular sound has become associated with physiological relaxation, whenever it occurs to you, there is a degree of relaxation. For this reason, it is not wise to switch about from sound to sound, because you will lose the beneficial effect of the training to respond to the sound with relaxation. You cannot do this consciously; you can only allow it to happen.

We believe that this may be the most important aspect of using the sound in the long run.

Because the body has to be trained to recognize the sound as a relaxation signal in order to consolidate and maintain any immediate benefits gained when first learning the meditation, regular **TWICE DAILY** practice is very important.

## **PART 7 (A)**

### **GOING TO SLEEP**

In the past few years, there has been a lot of research into sleep and dreaming. We now know that, when asleep, everyone spends part of the time dreaming and part of the time in 'deep sleep' it has been shown that some kind of mental activity actually goes on all night. Most people dream vividly for 10 to 20 minutes every hour and a half. Dreaming is very important. If someone is woken up, every time they start to dream vividly, even if they are allowed other sleep, they soon become very distressed and agitated; and may even begin to hallucinate after several nights.

When you dream apparently your brain sorts out your experiences and thoughts, filing them into order, trying out this combination and that. At the same time, your physical body is getting on with its repair and maintenance functions. What happens when you go to sleep is that your body settles down into deep restfulness.

When it is restful enough (usually after an hour or so of sleep) the maintenance functions begin to work, removing the stress of our daily activities. This physical activity has a corresponding mental activity - vivid dreaming. After 10 or 20 minutes, the body again settles down into deep restfulness and dreaming fades out. This process goes on all night: sleeping to dreaming to sleeping to dreaming. This is normal sleep.

However, you might have experienced occasions when it is difficult to get to sleep. You go to bed; you put out the light; but, instead of drifting off to sleep, you find that your mind is whirling. All the excitements or worries of the day churn over and over in your mind. You are tired but you can't get to sleep. What has happened is due to the very high levels of worry or excitement, which have produced a lot of physiological stress. No sooner do you lie down in bed, than the body immediately tries to restore the balance. Normally, you would have gone to sleep if it might have been an hour before the maintenance activity in the body was strong enough to start you dreaming. But, tonight, there is so much stress that even a small amount of restfulness is enough to start the process. Your body begins to un-stress rapidly; maybe you even feel some twitches or jerks. Such vigorous un-stressing; produces vigorous mental activity, just like a dream ... but you are still awake, when normally you would be asleep, unconscious of what is going on.

All this is somewhat similar to what happens during meditation: release of stress producing mental activity as a result of restfulness. It is not appropriate to do meditation while going to sleep, so we recommend the following procedure when it is difficult to get to sleep: instead of getting involved in the whirling thoughts in your mind, pay attention to your breathing. Do not breathe in any particular way or in any particular rhythm, simply notice your breath as it passes in and out of your nostrils just as during meditation, do not concentrate or use any effort, whenever you notice that your attention is caught up in the whirling thoughts, gently return to your breathing... and in 'few seconds, you will again be caught up in the churning thoughts --- so again, you gently pay attention to your breathing. Do not concentrate on your breathing, pay it no more attention than you would to a TV commercial, you know what is happening, but you are not really interested.

When laying in whatever comfortable position you usually sleep in, whenever you notice that you are getting involved with the busy thoughts in your mind, gently return to



paying attention to your breathing. Never try to relax. When you feel tight in some part of your body, pay attention to that tightness 'To feel tight' is a signal that some part of your body is trying to loosen and cannot, so 'feel' some sensation there. When you feel tight, pay attention to that tightness in a very casual and lazy way.

Then, you will probably go off again on to the whirling and churning thoughts that are flowing through your mind. Quietly lying in bed, gently bring your attention again to your breathing or to some physical sensations, somewhere in your body. Maybe in 5 or 10 minutes, your thoughts begin to become more and more dreamlike or fantastic, and it is quite a long time before you realise that you have not been paying attention to your breathing - good - you are starting to settle down.

A few more cycles of paying attention to your breathing or to your body and then realising that you are again involved in your churning mental activity and then returning to the breathing ... you drift off to sleep. If you awake during the night, use this means of distracting your attention from whatever is keeping you awake, to get as much rest as you can under the circumstances. Do not worry about how long you seem to stay awake, just pay attention to your breathing. Some people say that under such circumstances they just switch on the light and lay there reading some light novel or magazine. This is their way of taking the situation as it comes. But most find observing the breathing or the body is a good way to be as restful as possible until your body and mind settle down enough to get to sleep properly.

It probably takes no more than the usual length of a dream for you to drift off unless you wake yourself up by stewing about whether you can get to sleep or not. Don't get too upset, especially if you are elderly. Anyone can go a whole night without sleep occasionally, and elderly people should have far less sleep than younger folk. Eight to ten hours is good for youngsters. Mature adults in good health should need no more than six to eight hours and many healthy elderly folk should sleep for no more than four to five hours. Only the sick might need more, or those who have become addicts to sleeping tablets.

The important point about these techniques of body-observation and breath-observation is to take it as it comes. It is not lying awake that will ever make anyone sick; it is lying awake worrying yourself into a fret that brings on sickness or distress. If you cannot sleep, then it is a wonderful opportunity to expand your horizons by reading that book that you have never had time to read, for example. But, the important thing is to take it all as it comes. This is the way to better health and to better sleep.

## Part 7(B)

### HANDLING EMOTIONAL EMERGENCIES

The 'going to sleep' technique is useful in helping us to handle emotional emergencies arising during the day. Emotionality is a term referring to the combination of internal physiological events taking place when the body is in a state of high arousal. This word is used because human beings in a state of emotionality generally report strong emotional feelings, such as anger, fear, panic, extreme, joy etc. Emotionality involves an arousal of the body's activation system, including increased flow of adrenalin, faster heart rate, and higher blood pressure, a tightening of the muscles, perhaps sweating.

This is all a very appropriate reaction if we encounter the kind of emergency, which demands that we either fight it or run away from it. But as human society has become more civilized, it has become less and less appropriate to handle the emergencies of life with such extreme readiness as fight or flight.

The result is that, too often the body prepares itself to engage in vigorous emergency activity, when actually all you can do is stand or sit where you are, trying not to lose your temper, trying not to get into a panic. I do not mean serious illness such as schizophrenia or manic depression which needs specialised or hospital treatment - rather the quite common emotional storms, that can happen to anybody from time to time.

Bursts of emotionality often stem from outside events; someone says something or does something those results in us becoming angry or afraid. Quite often, it seems however as though for some internal physical reason, the body's activation system switches on, and we move into a state of high physical arousal. How will we feel emotionally at such times, often depends on what is happening around you at the time. There have been experiments in which emotionality has been induced by injecting people with adrenaline.

If they are then put with people who are very happy, they too become very happy. But if they are placed in a room where someone is displaying anger, they too become angry. When we are highly aroused and have strong emotionality, it is as though our mind looks around for something to be emotional about - and so according to the circumstances, we feel happy or angry or afraid. We have all met people who seem to switch suddenly from extreme happiness to extreme anxiety or sadness, even though there seem no real reasons for it.

When you feel bad, do not take too much notice of the very good reasons seem to find for why you feel this way. These reasons may be just be the result of physical emotionality rather than anything serious or important in your circumstances. We call such experiences 'Storms of Emotionality' like weather storms, they seem to blow up out of nowhere, do a surprising amount of damage and usually they disappear as quickly as they came. It is in the nature of storms of emotionality that, not only do they come, but also they go.

There are several ways to handle such storms of emotionality:

The worst thing to do is to try to bottle up your feeling and suppress any suppression of emotion. This can only result in the energy which has been released being turned inward against your body, leading to a whole series of illnesses of the kind usually called psychosomatic and known to be stress induced such as migraines, hyper-tension, acid-

stomach, ulcers, kidney troubles etc.

A second thing that you can do about upsurges of emotionality is to engage in vigorous work or activity to burn up the excess energy. Handled with discretion, this can be helpful. After all, it is better to beat the carpet than to beat the children; it is better to kick a football than to kick the dog. But unfortunately, any benefit from such exhausting activity is usually outweighed by the amount of stress and strain incurred by such vigorous physical activity, unless you can handle that stress readily in its turn, by doing meditation later.

A third thing you can do when you feel a storm of emotionality is to give way to it, scream or jump up and down in a temper. Technically it can be argued that such emotional behaviour is a great relief. However we are not solitary beings. To give way to anger usually means we lose our temper with someone else. Emotionality often has disastrous results in our relationships.

A fourth more desirable solution to the matter is that when left to themselves, storms of emotionality usually only last for about a quarter or half an hour at the most. The best way to handle emotional storms is to avoid doing anything, which might sustain them or build up your stress levels. Remember storms of emotionality not only come, but they also pass away.

What we need is something to distract our attention from the violent emotional feelings that seem to dominate our mind at the moment, until they have subsided enough for them to no longer dominate our lives and behaviour.

At the same time, we need to encourage our body's recuperation responses to come on to the fullest possible extent under these circumstances. This way, your body repairs and maintenance functions can dissolve the stress built up during the storm of emotionality and restore your body towards better health.

It would be ideal if you could do a 20-30 minute session of meditation during those times when storms of emotionality seem to overwhelm us. Remember however, that under these circumstances, it is especially important that you take no notice of the turbulent, unpleasant thoughts that are whirling through your mind and bring back your sound, again and again, always gently throughout the meditation. At such times, it may be better to use other relaxing techniques for immediate stress release and the initial calming down period - followed by a period of meditation later on.

When the clouds hide the sun, they do nothing to with the sun. Look! Already the wind is blowing them away.

## **IN TIMES OF EMOTIONAL EMERGENCY**

If possible, get away somewhere on your own, and lie down or sit down. But, even if you cannot get away on your own for ten minutes, it is just possible to do these techniques in the presence of other people or even standing up.

Pay attention to your breath, as it flows gently in and out of your nostrils; or pay attention to any physical sensations you happen to notice anywhere in your body. Casually ask yourself: Where in my body is the anger (or the fear or whatever negative

emotion you feel)? You may feel some tingling or ache or tightness, a pressure, anything. Just observe casually and lazily what happens to the sensations. You will probably notice that they change, growing weaker or stronger, shifting about from place to place perhaps, until the sensation disappears. As the various sensations disappear, you will realize that the strong emotions are also settling down. If you do not happen to notice physical sensations, just observe your breathing.

## **DO NOT CONCENTRATE ON BREATHING OR SENSATIONS**

Observe them lazily, casually, paying them no more attention than you would a TV commercial- you know what is happening but you are not interested. NOTE: it is vital that you do not pay any attention to whatever emotions or thoughts that come into your mind, even though they are very strong. Do NOT try to control them or analyse them. What they are about it not of any particular importance, for they are just the by-product of physical release and stress. Whenever you realize you are caught up in your thoughts or feelings, gently return to the breathing or whatever physical sensation attracts your attention. It is just like the meditation, but instead of your sound, now you gently return to a different object of attention, your breathing or some physical sensation – just as neutral, just as effective.

## **DURING THE MEDITATION**

It can happen occasionally, if you have a history of past distressing experiences, that during meditation some thought or feeling seems to overwhelm you and it seems to become an effort to return gently to your sound. In such cases, do not try to, but pay attention. Within a few minutes, the strong thoughts and feelings will subside and you will quite easily return to your sound again. Never, under any circumstances, get up out of the meditation while you are feeling negative or having powerful negative thoughts. Just sit quietly, observing your body and breathing, until the negativity settles down.

Then, before you get up, do some easy breathing (next Part) or the refreshment technique (later Part). Then you can get up, having released a great deal of negative stress. But if you jump up before the negativity has settled down, a cloud of negative thinking or feeling down can hang around you for hours. It is of vital importance that you sit for a few minutes longer, whenever you have any strong negative thoughts or feelings during meditation, to allow the stress to be fully dissolved and removed by your body's recuperation system.

## PART 8

Breathing is very important. Many people use breathing exercises with good benefit to aid relaxation. Other than the attention on the breath, as explained to you in an earlier lesson, we do not use any special methods of breathing our meditations. However we do like to let people know some useful breathing techniques of value on other occasions outside of your meditation on sessions. While you are doing meditation you do not try to regulate your our breathing at all.

During meditation, you may become more aware of the breath, but it is not a concern. Your only concern is to sit there quietly daydreaming and whenever it occurs to you, bringing your sound to mind, and taking it all as it comes. If perhaps, during meditation your attention does go to your breathing you may focus or notice the breath in and out through your nose. In addition, this is ok, let the sound ride the breath.

Perhaps you noticed that your breath is very slow. Maybe a thought came to you and you wondered whether you may of have stopped breathing for a moment. Then you may find yourself simply taking a deep breath quite naturally and easily. When anything like this happens, gently brings yours attention back to your sound and go with your session.

Sometimes your sound seems to go along with your breathing or with your pulse Just take this as it comes. Either your sound will speed up or slow down; or your breathing will speed up or slow down; or go their separate ways again. Both are rhythmical, so it no surprise if they join sometimes.

It is very common, with regular practice of meditation that, during any session, the breathing can become much slower and gentler. It seems to be very shallow, but it is not shallow in the ordinary sense that the breath is coming only from the top of the lungs. It is so gentle because the diaphragm at the base of the lungs is barely moving yet the breath is coming from the diaphragm. It is impossible to reproduce consciously the gentle movements of the breathing apparatus, which happen spontaneously during an experienced person's meditation sessions.

In order to cultivate good breathing habits it is a good idea to use the easy breathing technique known as “Easy, alternate breathing”.

Easy breathing is described in detail later in this lesson. You could look over the instruction now before going on with the lecture. You can do easy breathing for anything up to 4 or 5 minutes before any session of meditation. Certainly you should always use it for a couple of minutes, at least. While you are doing it, you can have your eyes open or closed. Some people like to do it while reading a book.

We recommend that you do easy, alternate breathing before any session of meditation, but if you are flustered or agitated then it is the BEST thing to do to settle you down, before you attempt to do anything so passive and gentle as meditation. If used on such occasions, you will find that after a few minutes you are able to slide into meditation quite gently and easily.

The reason why it is valuable when you are flustered or agitated is that when you are

over-activated it is very difficult to do anything gentle or passive. No sooner do you sit than you want to jump up; you close your eyes and immediately they pop open again. Under such circumstances, you do something relaxing, which is also somewhat complicated- opening and closing each nostril alternately with your fingers, for examples. Yet the exercise is quite relaxing in itself.

Easy breathing is also a good thing to do if you are dull and stuffy with study or mental work, especially if you have a head cold. However, it is quite important to be aware that if one nostril is completely blocked so that when you open that nostril no air comes out at all, that you should never strain to force air through the blocked nostril. When you have done this a few times, you will find that a little air escapes, and the next time a little more. Soon you can take a tissue and clear your nostrils completely. Never strain.

You will notice that we emphasise that you should breathe continuously, not retaining or holding your breath at any stage. The reason for this is given in the series of questions and answers on many topics, which are included in this lesson.

Now you should read carefully through the instructions and have some practice is easy, alternate breathing, before you go on to have 15-20 minutes of meditation.

## **SLOWING DOWN THE BREATH TO RELAX**

Some people like to use slow, deep breathing as a means of relaxation. Many experiments have shown that it is possible to slow down your heart rate, for example, with slow, gentle breathing.

If you decide to try this, however, it is important that you do it properly. Most people breathe anything from 10 to 14 times per minute. They decide to do some slow breathing, and so they try to breathe just 3 or 4 times a minute. What happens, to their surprise, is that instead of slowing down, their heart speeds up! Actually, because their lungs are not taking in anywhere near as much air and oxygen as usual, the heart begins to pump faster to extract as much oxygen as it can from its apparently limited supplies of air.

The proper way to do slow breathing for relaxation is:

1. Time your usual breathing rate. Suppose it is 12 breaths a minute, that is, it takes about 5 seconds to do a full breath in and out.
2. Count "one and..two and..three and" as you first breathe in for three seconds and out for three seconds.
3. After a minute or so, slow down, in for four seconds and out for four seconds.
4. Be content to do, say, in for five seconds and out for five seconds at this first trial.
5. Each session of slow breathing, start by slowing down just a little from whatever your ordinary rate is. Soon you will find that you have trained yourself to breathe gently and slowly without speeding up your heart; indeed, a pulse count will probably show that after a few minutes of gentle, deep breathing, it has slowed down appreciably.

If you want to do deep breathing, do not strain. Read the notes on the complete breath, and apply them in a very gentle, easy way. But never strain, just breathe gently as always. We seek the support of nature in all that we do.

## EASY BREATHING TECHNIQUE

Sit in a comfortable position, either on a chair or on the floor.

1. Close the right nostril with the right thumb
2. Breathe out through your left nostril- gently, noiselessly, completely.
3. As soon as the lungs are comfortably emptied, immediately begin to breathe in through the left nostril- gently, noiselessly, and completely.
4. As soon as the lungs are comfortably filled, open the right nostril and close the left nostril with the fore and middle finger of the right hand.
5. Immediately, without holding your breath, begin to breathe out through the right nostril- gently, noiselessly, and completely.
6. As soon as your lungs are comfortably emptied, immediately begin to breathe in through the right nostril- gently, noiselessly, completely.
7. As soon as your lungs are comfortably filled, immediately open your left nostril and close your right nostril with the right thumb and begin the process again from step No. 1

If you are left handed, then you will use your left thumb and fingers; and begin by closing your left nostril, if you wish.

You should practice easy breathing for 2 to 5 minutes each time.

A simple way to remember the process is: -

Breathe out and in, change nostrils; breathe out and in, change nostrils.

You can use easy breathing: -

- Immediately before any session of meditation, especially if you have been very busy or excited;
- Whenever you feel flustered or agitated during the day or night;
- If you feel stuffy or dull, while studying or reading a book;
- In front of an open window, immediately on rising in the morning.

## EASY BREATHING IS DONE GENTLY, NOISELESSLY, COMPLETELY.

- Gently means do not PUSH the air in and out of your nostrils; let it flow in and out in the ordinary way;
- Noiselessly means as noiselessly as possible, i.e. gently. If there is some blockage, inevitably there may be a little noise;
- Completely means as completely filled or empty as is comfortable. Never strain. Never hold your breath, although if you do accidentally, it does not matter.

If you do have a cold and one nostril is completely blocked so that no air escapes, **DO NOT PUSH**, immediately switch back to the clear nostril; continue the cycle, opening the blocked nostril but not pushing, returning to the other clear nostril. After a little while, you will probably find that a little air begins to escape through the blocked nostril. Continue alternating the nostrils, until you are able comfortably and easily to blow your

nose with some tissues and clear away the rubbish.

It is always a good idea to have some tissues handy when doing easy breathing, as it seems to clear the nostrils very efficiently.

## **NEVER STRAIN – NEVER HOLD YOUR BREATH**

## **SOME OTHER USEFUL BREATHING PRACTICES**

While we do not recommend retention or holding the breath, we do not object to many of the relaxing breathing techniques that are available:

## **OBSERVING THE BREATHING**

This is a very good technique indeed, almost as good as meditation in its own right, and even better in certain circumstances, which were discussed in the previous lesson

## **THE COMPLETE BREATH**

Before an open window, or in an airy place:

- Draw the breath in, lowering the diaphragm;
- Continue to draw in the breath, expanding the ribcage;
- Continue to draw the breath, expanding the upper chest.

## **DO NOT HOLD YOUR BREATH – AS SOON AS YOUR LUNGS ARE FULL**

Begin to breathe out, relaxing the muscles in the open chest:

- continue to breathe out, contracting the ribcage;
- continue to breathe out, raising the diaphragm and pulling in the abdomen, until the lungs are empty.

## **DO NOT PAUSE, BUT IMMEDIATELY ALLOW THE BREATH TO FLOW IN AGAIN**

Complete breathing is most effective when done slowly and gently.

Some people like to count while they complete breathing, pacing their breath with their steps if they are walking in the open air.

Occasionally during complete breathing, when the lungs are filled, purse your lips and expel the air quickly and completely. It is very cleansing and refreshing to do this. It is called a cleansing breath.



## QUESTIONS PEOPLE HAVE ASKED

The following questions have been asked, over the years, by various people who have taken this meditation course.

### **1. Many people make comments like the following:**

- **I have too many thoughts during meditation**
- **I have bad thoughts or unpleasant thoughts during meditation**
- **I lose my sound for a very long time**
- **My thoughts go on for a very long time.**

If any of these apply to you then it means the meditation is going very well. Good or bad thoughts, it does not matter, all signal the release of stress, just as do good or bad dreams during sleep.

## MUCH THOUGHT MEANS MUCH RELEASE OF STRESS

The meditation is just efficient daydreaming, so if you are having lots of thoughts then it means you are doing it well. The sound is just the centering point to return to, if you find that you are not only having many thoughts but also noticing that they are there.

### **2. I seem to have thoughts (or images) at the same time as my sound.**

Take it as it comes. In daily activity there are always a lot of things going on in your mind at the same time. You can pay attention to any of them, as you like. During meditation, when we notice that this has happened, then we pay attention to the sound.

### **3. How do I handle outside noise?**

It has been observed that meditators with a few weeks experience are more likely to find outside noises a nuisance than newly taught ones. Very experienced meditators, of course, meditate anywhere, anytime, no matter what the noise level may be, they take it as it comes.

There are several reasons why noise may become a problem for some people. Firstly, it is quite likely the meditator of a few weeks experience has got over the excitement of learning the technique and is beginning to take more notice of their environment. They are less preoccupied with their own internal states and so become much more aware of external events.

Or, secondly, they might be becoming more sensitive and alert and so more aware of noise generally than they might have done previously, especially when sitting quietly.

Noise is no hindrance to meditation. We take the noise as it comes and gently bring our sound to mind, again and again, every second or so, if it seems to happen that way. If anyone can think, "Damn, the noise", then they can think about their sound, so they might as well! Thinking the sound does not have to be very clear in your mind; it is just an idea of it, a memory of it. That's all. You can meditate anywhere, in the bus, during a dull lecture or film; but we don't especially recommend that you go to the cinema to do your meditation.

We never recommend earplugs or noise cancelling headphones except under the most unusual of circumstances, when such devices are advisable when doing anything, such as a noisy factory or an airport. Earplugs only draw attention to the noise situation and people who use them unnecessarily will sit listening to their heart beating or their stomach rumbling.

## **THE ATTENTION GAME**

If you cannot quite understand how easy it is to move your attention from one thing to another among the many things that may be in your mind at any one time, play the Attention Game. We always have a lot of things going on in our minds at any one time. But our attention is normally only on one of them at a time, but it is usually moving very freely from one thing to another.

During meditation, when things are somewhat simpler than usual you can notice that there are more than one thing in your mind. Perhaps you notice a couple of things, your sound and some outside noise or your thoughts and your sound simultaneously. Your attention right now can be on the words you are reading; on some noise in the street or in the house; or it can be wondering, at the same time, what the Attention Game is. Perhaps your attention is on your feet or your head. Do you notice how as you read each thing, so your attention seems to go to it...just for a second?

Place your two hands in front of you, palms up, side by side. Now, without moving your head, look to the left palm; and then move your eyes so that you are looking at the right palm; and now, still without moving your head, again look at your left palm. Did you notice that while you were looking at one hand, the other seemed to fade into the background; and when you switched from left palm to right palm, it was now the left palm that faded into the background? Yet both hands are there, all the time, at the same time.

If you try to thrust one hand out of the way...go ahead, push one hand out of sight...now you have drawn all your attention to that hand, just by trying to get rid of it. Just so, if you try to get rid of thoughts during meditation, firstly, you will only draw attention to what you are trying to get rid of; but more importantly, the free flow of thoughts without hindrance is the essential character of meditation, so if you ever did succeed in getting rid of them you would have defeated the whole purpose of doing your relaxation technique. Now, finally, what we would like you to do now is to sit quietly, with your eyes closed and try not to think about elephants!

- 4. Some people say they cannot concentrate on the sound. Good, because you are not supposed to concentrate on the sound.**

## **WE USE THE SOUND TO LOSE THE SOUND**

The sound is just a centering point to which you return every so often, when it occurs to you. But the purpose of the meditation is to have a free flowing stream of casual thoughts, not to be repeating the sound.

### **5. My sound sits on my breathing or pulse.**

This is quite all right. **TAKE IT AS IT COMES.**

### **6. I cannot seem to get back onto my sound.**

Why would you want to? You do not have to repeat your sound in some way, just bring it to mind, as a continuous gentle flow, over and over again. It doesn't matter whether you remember the way you said and heard it, or the way you read it, just bring it to mind again...and again...and again...whenever you think to do it. Now, what you are probably concerned about is that you have lots and lots of thoughts for as long as may be 15 or 20 minutes, it doesn't matter. Just when you notice the thoughts are there, bring the sound to mind.

### **7. Is there anything I can do wrong in the meditation?**

There is only one thing you can do wrong, and that is to not to the meditation, or if you prefer them, some other reliable relaxation exercise. When you are doing the meditation, whatever happens is the right thing, so that you only need to take it easy and take it as it comes.

### **8. Meditation never seems to be easy for me.**

You are perhaps working too hard at it. Really, all you have to do is sit there and day dream; and every so often, when it occurs to you, bring your sound to mind, just to make sure that you keep on day dreaming, and don't start to get too involved in whatever is passing through your mind.

If you are still feeling that you cannot sit at all then you should be using the easy breathing technique or some other more vigorous relaxation exercise than the meditation technique.

### **9. Sometimes I do not feel like sitting down to do the meditation.**

The session of meditation that you do not feel like doing is the important one. If you feel flustered or agitated then use the easy breathing technique to settle you down. But maybe you are just feeling a bit bored or negative, so just sit and let all that negativity unwind itself. Maybe the thoughts that pass through your mind are a bit dreary, but as the say, "better out than in".

### **10. My eyes keep opening: I want to get up and go.**

Take it as it comes. If you feel like opening your eyes, leave them closed; and when you find that they are open, just gently close them again. If you feel like standing up, stay sitting down; and if you find that you have stood up, then just gently sit down again and close your eyes and go on. If you are so agitated, then do the easy breathing; or maybe the personal refreshment technique you will learn in the next lesson. Perhaps you just stand for a moment or two and do a few gentle slow, deep breaths, then sit down again. And if you need to repeat this process several times in the one session of meditation, then it does not matter; you can alternate from one relaxation skill to another; just so that

you give your body the chances it needs to relax, one way or another. But don't rush off and start activities until you have settled down, just a bit anyway.

**11. Nothing ever happens during my meditation sessions.**

**GOOD**, in fact, **VERY GOOD**. The lessening of happening is the right happening in meditation, so take it as it comes. You must be doing very well.

**12. I get bored doing meditation. I think it is just a waste of time.**

Boredom during meditation sessions is a sure sign that you are paying too much attention to whatever is going on in your mind, obviously something very dreary; so what you should do, is to continue to sit until the feelings of boredom have settled down, and maybe all that boring stress has started to unwind and your body has gained some relaxation. One person who said that he was bored during a meditation session, in fact, had lowered his heart rate and lowered his blood pressure and so, even if he felt a bit bored, it had done his body the good he had been seeking. After all, meditation is not supposed to be exciting; if it were it would lead to an arousal of the body's systems, and not give you any relaxation.

**13. Why shouldn't I lie down to do meditation?**

You maybe will go to sleep, but that wouldn't matter.

**14. I often feel sleepy during meditation.**

This is very good. This means that there has been a lot of release of stress. It happens when people have been working hard, physically or mentally, or if they have been worrying a lot or have been ill, that they often doze off to sleep during meditation. It is surprisingly deep for some people, even though it is only a few minutes. Maybe you have some dreams. When you wake, either get up after a couple of minutes sitting quietly or continue with your session of meditation. It is a good idea after such sessions to stand up and do some deep slow breathing immediately after meditation, or to do the personal refreshment technique outlined in the next lesson.

**15. I feel sleepy immediately after meditation.**

We do not mind when this happens, or how often it happens. If you have the time, just sit quietly for a few moments longer, maybe with your eyes open now, until your body has started to speed up again after what must have been very profound relaxation physiologically. It often happens this way after you have released a lot of physical stress or mental stress. It can happen if you have been working hard, or playing hard or worrying a lot, or have been ill. The personal refreshment technique in the next lesson is a good thing to do after such sessions of meditation, or some deep, slow breathing while standing.

**16. My head often falls forwards during meditation.**

This is very simple to handle – just leave it there if you like, or raise your head again. It doesn't matter either way. However, if your head falls back it can be somewhat uncomfortable especially if it seems to jerk. If this is a problem, then you should sit with

your chair near the wall, and prop your head on a cushion, then when it relaxes, it will just stay there and not tend to fall either way. We recommend using a cushion to everyone, if they feel like it.

**17. I swallow a lot of saliva during meditation.**

Very good. The salivary glands are a part of the recuperative system of the body; and this is a sure sign that it is beginning to function more freely. Just swallow and go on with your session. It is a very good sign.

**18. I feel like crying during meditation, or after meditation/ or I feel I have very wet eyes during or after meditation.**

Very good. The lachrymal glands (or tear glands) are also part of the recuperative system of the body. It means that a lot of relaxation is taking place. If you wish to cry during meditation, then do so, it is very good. This advice applies particularly to men and boys, for in our culture it has been regarded as “un-masculine” to cry, which has done a lot of physical harm to male members of society. Much of the psychosomatic illness, heart trouble, ulcers etc is caused by bottled-up tears, hindering the body’s recuperative processes.

**19. Why do I sometimes sigh deeply just after starting a session of meditation?**

Your breathing has started to slow down quite a lot, but you really haven’t yet relaxed deeply enough for everything else to slow down along with it, so you sigh or take a deep breath, something like that to equalize the pressures in your breathing apparatus. It doesn’t mean anything much. Just sigh, or breathe deeply and go on.

**20. When I am doing meditation, I get sensations of rising or falling.**

Such feelings can come along during meditation because many people are not used to very deep relaxation, unless they are asleep. So they either interpret the feelings of relaxation in some unusual way; or feeling their muscles loosen and let go, they think they are going to faint or fall. As long as you are sitting in some comfortable chair, you cannot fall out, so take it as it comes. These feelings are a sign of deep relaxation.

**21. I get a neck-ache during meditation.**

This is almost certainly a result of trying to push your sound along, or think about it over and over again, instead of just bring it to mind. I have actually seen a few people doing the meditation whose head was bobbing up and down, a few millimeters. When asked later, yes they tended to get a bit of a neck-ache doing meditation. This means you are probably subvocalising the sound, instead of just remembering it or bring it to mind. The solution is always to lean your head back a little on a soft cushion, and be much more casual about your meditation sessions. Meditation is NOT repeating the sound, it is daydreaming – efficiently.

**22. I have a lot of pain. I am often ill. Should I do meditation?**

It is possible and advisable to do meditation even when you are in pain or ill. But do not

worry about whether you sit or lay down under such circumstances. Certainly it would be good if you dozed off to sleep at these times. It would give the body a chance to recuperate better. If the pain becomes very strong, then you can sometimes handle it better, by paying attention to it, very casually but lazily. You should consult your doctor about using painkilling medicines, rather than seek to work out your own medication. Read the information in lesson 7 about handling emergencies, by using body observation or breath observation. If you are sick in bed, you can meditate all the time. This means, whenever you are not doing anything else, and then bring your sound to mind, and not mind when you doze off to sleep. This is good.

### **23. How does meditation fit in with religion, prayer, yoga, Buddhist meditation or other relaxation techniques?**

This will be dealt with in a later Part.

### **24. Sometimes I feel an ache somewhere just after meditation.**

This is a sign that you have started to unwind some physical tension and the process is not yet quite finished. You should continue to sit quietly for another moment or so, just quietly observing the ache or other sensation, until it fades away, or you feel you want to get up and go. But always be careful to move gently and slowly for a little while.

### **25. Sometimes I feel irritable or a bit depressed immediately after the meditation.**

This is a similar situation to that discussed in number 24. Something has started to unwind, and it is not quite done, so just continues to sit quietly until it settles down.

## **STRONG PHYSICAL SENSATION OR MENTAL FEELINGS AFTER MEDITATION ARE A SIGN THAT SOMETHING HAS STARTED THAT IS NOT YET FINISHED.**

It is vital that you do not rush out of any session, but under these circumstances, especially if you cannot continue to sit for a little while due to lack of time, that you take it very easily. These things do not happen very often or to very many people, but they have happened and the way to handle it is to take things quietly for a while. Do not be overwhelmed by some transitory physical or emotional sensation. When the clouds hide the sun; they do nothing to the sun. Look! Already the wind is blowing them away.

Reread the material on handling emotional emergencies. If you go back into activity too suddenly, you will inhibit the unwinding process, and be left with a veil of negativity, which can hang around for quite a while. It is better to let it dissolve immediately by continuing to sit a while, with eyes either opened or closed. Which ever you prefer.

### **26. What is the difference between meditation and hypnosis?**

There is considerable difference of opinion among scientists about what the techniques generally called hypnosis involve. Consensus generally exists on the following factors:

- some focusing of the attention within a limited field of experience e.g. looking at a TV screen; gazing at a spot on a wall; looking at a light or flame; listening with eyes closed to some repetitive voice or rhythmic noise.

- Some form of command or suggestion e.g. an advertisement on television; suggestions from a hypnotherapist; your own voice pre-recorded; a CD, something like that.

During a hypnosis session, whether auto suggestive or with a hypnotist or recording, if relaxation is suggested then relaxation will probably take place; but if activation is suggested then the person will probably become more active. However, there is little research evidence that shows that during hypnotic relaxation, heart rate can increase, rather than decrease as it commonly does during meditation. During meditation, we do NOT use the sound hypnotically for we do NOT repeat it over and over again, we just bring it up to mind occasionally when it occurs to us and let it fade away, as it will. Nor is there any element of suggestion in the meditation process, for we specifically recommend against any kind of suggestion or anticipation or expectations of any kind. From experience, meditation works better without them.

## **27. Why do you recommend against holding the breath?**

We would not bother to make this a recommendation if it were not for the fact that many books on meditative techniques and many yoga teachers do recommend holding the breath in particular parts of their systems (but not all).

If you hold your breath, your heart will continue to pump blood through the system and will continue to try to extract oxygen from the lungs; and it will continue to send carbon dioxide laden blood to the lungs so that they can discard this waste matter from the body. But, if you hold your breath your lungs cannot get rid of the carbon dioxide. You have interrupted the normal process. The blood will still be full of carbon dioxide circulating through the body.

Now, there is not much harm (or good) from holding your breath for a second or so occasionally. But if someone practices holding the breath for a long time regularly, say, for a minute or more, then the build up for carbon dioxide begins to affect the brain, giving rise to curious physical sensations and eventually even mental experiences so vivid that they seem real...hallucinations. Some mistake these poisonous effects of carbon dioxide for valid spiritual experiences. But to be blue in the face is no guarantee of self-realisation.

We seek for the growth of human potential in a natural way. We do not try to interfere with the body's natural processes. We do not seek to excite the brain cells.

## **PART 9**

This lesson is about the relationship of meditation to physical exercise. It includes instruction in a simple massage technique called the Personal Refreshment Technique. Like the Easy Breathing Technique, it is not a substitute for regular sessions of meditation. It is something useful to do after meditation sessions; or immediately after any kind of heavy exertion, especially if you are not used to heavy physical exercise.

Before you have another session of meditation, read the lesson as well as the instructions for the Personal Refreshment Technique. Then go on to read the rest of this page, before you begin your meditation session.

### **YOUR FULL SESSION OF MEDITATION.**

On this occasion, before you begin to meditate, sit with your eyes closed and do Easy Breathing for a couple of minutes.

After you have done 15 to 20 minutes meditation, continue to sit with your eyes closed for another minute or so, not concerned with whether your sound is there or not. While you are sitting with your eyes closed, do the Personal Refreshment Technique. It is a good idea to take off your spectacles, watch and shoes before you begin to meditate, so that they do not get in the way.

On this first occasion, keep the instructions by you so that you can refer to it, while you are learning the technique. It is not especially important to keep your eyes closed while doing Personal Refreshment.

After you have done all this, you will have a good idea of what a “full session” of meditation is like. A full session of meditation consists of:

Easy Breathing	2-3 minutes
Meditation	15-20 minutes
Personal Refreshment	2 minutes

A full session of meditation takes about 20 to 25 minutes to do. Not everyone does full sessions of meditation. However, if you have been referred to meditation by a doctor or psychologist, or if you have a history of anxiety problems, you should certainly do full sessions of meditation, including both the Easy Breathing and Personal Refreshment. Anyone who is using meditation as a means to spiritual growth, should do full sessions of meditation.

Even at its longest, a full session of meditation should not take longer than 30 minutes. It is not doing long meditation that brings results, it is doing meditation regularly – twice every day – that works best.

Many people ask what is the relationship of meditation to physical exercise; and what is the difference between the vigorous physical exercises taught in the gyms or in schools, and Eastern kinds of exercise such as Yoga and Tai Chi. People also ask: if stress causes anxiety, and physical exertion produces stress, why do doctors recommend physical exercise?



Stress, in itself, does not produce anxiety. It is only when stress has accumulated to high levels in the body that it leads to mental strain and anxiety. Stress is not harmful, as long as your body can recuperate and re-cycle the stress-hormones promptly. Many people lead such sedentary lives that their bodies need some exercise in order to stimulate its proper functioning. Exercise enables all the body's organs to work better. It is well known that people who do regular exercise, under expert guidance, have a slower heart rate and lower blood pressure than people who do not.

Physical exercise tones you up, and meditation is a good complement to physical exercise, for it encourages your body to recuperate faster. Vigorous exercise also burns up the body's stored energy, so that it is a valuable supplement to dieting for folks who are trying to lose weight.

Eastern kinds of exercise are generally very gentle. The purpose of Yoga exercises, for example, is quite different from that of vigorous physical exercises. Yoga exercises were developed as part of the daily routine of reclusive monks, whose aim is to withdraw from all normal activities and to do as little as possible except sit and meditate. For health's sake, they had to develop the postures of Hatha Yoga to keep muscles supple, they also developed techniques to cleanse their bowels and other body passages before of their lower food intake and activity.

Tai Chi is a Chinese technique of gentle dance-like movements, similar in style but not in speed or vigour to the movements of other martial arts. Tai Chi was developed by Buddhist monks as a form of dynamic meditation using the whole body. We recommend Tai Chi highly, as long as you can learn from a qualified teacher.

## **THE PERSONAL REFRESHMENT TECHNIQUE**

1. Squeeze and slide with the palms of the hands, from the top of the head down over the face and neck until you reach the chest.
2. Squeeze and slide with the palms of the hands, from the top of the head down over the back of the neck and shoulders, bringing your hands around the ends of your shoulders and down onto your chest.
3. Hold out your right hand palm downward, and grip it lightly with the palm of your left hand – both hands will be facing downwards. Squeeze and slide the palm of your left hand along the top of your right fingers, hand and arm, about an inch or so at a time, finally bringing your left hand across your shoulder and down to your heart.
4. Hold out your right hand palm downward, and grip it lightly with the palm of your left hand, which this time is facing upward. Squeeze and slide the palm of your left along your fingers and palm, and along under your arm and armpit, about an inch or so at a time, bringing your hand onto your chest near your heart.
5. Repeat Step 3, lightly gripping your left hand with your right hand.
6. Repeat Step 4, lightly gripping your left hand with your right hand.
7. Place both hands, fingertips touching, on your stomach below your navel. Gently squeeze and slide both your hands up your torso, until you reach your heart.
8. Place both hands, fingertips touching, at the base of your spine. Gently squeeze and slide your hands up your back as far as you can go COMFORTABLY. Whatever you do, do not strain. When you have gone up as far as you comfortably can, bring your hands around your ribcage, gently massaging your body, until you reach your heart.

9. With both hands, grip the toes of your right foot lightly. Squeeze and slide your hands up your foot and leg, as far as your hip. Continue to squeeze and slide your right hand up the side of the body to the heart.
10. Repeat Step 9, gently massaging your left foot, leg and thigh.
11. Lie on your back and clasp your hands around your knees, raising your head slightly. Roll from side to side several times, gently massaging your spine. There is not need to roll very far and especially advised to keep the movement small and tight. If there is any history of back pain, seek medical advice before attempting.
12. Stretch out and lie quietly with your hands beside your body for a couple of minutes.

## **WHEN TO USE THE PERSONAL REFRESHMENT TECHNIQUE**

1. At the end of any session of meditation.
2. Immediately after vigorous physical exercise.
3. When you first wake from sleep, sitting on the edge of the bed.
4. Immediately before gently stimulating exercises such as Yoga or Tai Chi
5. After a hot shower or bath, or a swim in cold water.

## **PRINCIPLES OF THE BENEFIT**

Squeezing gently and sliding your hands over the skin, always towards the heart, is a gentle massage technique that stimulates the flow of blood in the veins, which are generally close to the surface than the arteries. The veins carry away physical, chemical stress substances for re-processing by the recuperative systems of the body.

Furthermore, if you have been very tight and knotted up, but now, after a session of meditation, you have much looser muscles, the gentle massage helps to re-integrate the newly loose parts of your body into the whole system.

## **PART 10**

During the past several weeks, you have probably been doing meditation regularly for 15 to 20 minutes twice a day. There is nothing more to the technique than this – twenty minutes twice a day, meditate, then forget about it while you get on with your daily life. Even the supplementary techniques are only useful for most people, while some never feel the need to make use of them. It is your regular practice of meditation that will bring the benefit.

### **LENGTH OF MEDITATION SESSIONS**

Only if you were very busy and therefore incurring more stress than usual, should you do the meditation more often than twice a day or for longer than 20 to 30 minutes. In unusually stressful times, a third session of 15 minutes or so in the middle of the day can be very refreshing.

The absolute maximum recommended on a regular basis is from 30 to 40 minutes twice a day. If you find that you are meditating regularly for more than half an hour, the properly investigate the use of the supplementary techniques in conjunction with meditation to bring maximum benefit and minimum risk.

Unless forming a part of some specific spiritual discipline for which you are receiving specific instruction from a reputable teacher, we strongly recommend against prolonged meditation sessions of hours at a time, multiple times per day. Prolonged meditation leads to unhealthy preoccupation with your internal mental states and an unbalanced attitude to life. Prolonged meditation is not a part of our technique and approach.

Meditation is built around the principle of alternation of restfulness and activity. This is the natural rhythm of life – the alternation of night and day, sleep and waking, and, during sleep, dreaming and deep sleep. Meditation adds two extra short periods of restfulness into your daily routine, with great extra benefit for minimal extra expenditure of time. A teacher of this technique who first learned it in the 19<sup>th</sup> century once said “We do it in the morning as a good foundation to a day’s work. We do it again in the evening as a reward well earned for work well done.”

### **CONTINUING WITH MEDITATION**

When you were first taught meditation, you were given a definition of meditation. It is a simple, natural process involving the progressive improvement of the system through the regular alternation of profound restfulness with normal daily activity. You were also told: “Expansion of awareness comes as the system becomes capable of maintaining awareness more and more clearly more and more of the time. Full awareness is when your whole system maintains clarity of awareness the whole time.”

This is what meditation is all about: firstly, the improvement of the natural functioning of the body by removing the stress which impedes it; and the consequent benefits for mental and physical health. These stem from the balancing of the body’s activating and recuperative nervous systems which, in turn, lead to increased energy for some people, clarity of mind for others, maybe improved personal relationships or greater ease of mind. But it is all the result of a very simple, natural process, not something complicated or difficult.

What you are doing when you do meditation properly is to use a simple technique to get out of the way, so that your physical system can get on with the job which it is perfectly capable of doing by itself, as long as you do not interfere with it, by straining yourself with all sorts of effort in meditation, or by working so hard in your daily life that your body and mind never gets the rest they need to do their maintenance and repair work.

Doing meditation is not adding something to your work twice a day. It is supplementing your daily rest and sleeping periods with additional rest. The important thing is

### **WHATEVER YOU DO WHEN YOU DO MEDITATION – DON”T TRY!**

The process is meant to be easy and effortless; therefore it should be done as easy and LAZY a manner as possible. When it seems to become difficult, it must be because you have misunderstood something. Go back and read the lessons again.

A very good approach to life is:

**Whatever comes I welcome, it helps me on my way.**

**Whoever comes I welcome, they help me on my way.**

A result of continuing to do meditation regularly for about 20 minutes twice a day, is a progressive, even gradual, improvement of your whole functioning. Your body used to be knotted up, so it did not work very well. Perhaps you have noticed at the beginning of your meditation how the muscles of your body spontaneously begin to loosen and relax. This loosening, this easing of stress, happens not only at a muscular level but also at chemical and cellular levels, too profound for you consciously to notice what is happening. In addition, your body is continuing to learn better how to balance its activating and recuperative systems. Not only do you recover more rapidly from anxiety or when you lose your temper, but also you are reacting to the energetics of life with more poise and less panic.

Before you began to do meditation regularly twice a day, it was very easy for you to become over-tired so that when an emergency came along, the most likely thing was that you panicked or got angry with someone. This was just the result of an inefficient physiological system usually. But the corollary is here – as your system gradually becomes more and more efficient as stresses are unwound, so you are less and less likely to behave in an undesirable way.

Have you noticed sometimes when you come out of meditation, a few minutes or so later, there comes a feeling of freshness around the eyes, or a spring in your step? This is just the beginning of the unfolding of clearer awareness. As time passes and you continue your regular twice-daily sessions of meditation, this clarity and freshness expands to occupy more and more of your life. It leads to a deeper insight into our own behavior and better understanding of the behavior of others. Understanding leads to Compassion so that we feel for our fellow human beings in a natural and harmonious way. Thus, there is growth in all our social relationships.

This growth comes about through two things. Firstly, the profound restfulness of meditation, and secondly, our engagement in normal daily activities. It is the alternation of deep rest with activity that is important. Normal daily activity does not mean anything

special – just the ordinary everyday activities of work and study, gardening and housework, playing and enjoying life, just ordinary activities in the world.

But normal also implies there are those things which are abnormal or sub-normal. Normal activities should be those appropriate for a mature and fully developed human being. Such activities can be described as life-supporting rather than life-damaging. Life-supporting activities do less harm to your environment and thus less harm to yourself. Let your activities in life give support to Nature and to your fellow beings.

But, do not strain. You can be assured that, as you continue to meditate for 20 minutes twice a day, your body will continue to clear away its stress and strain, and quite spontaneously, your attitudes and activities will become more and more life supporting.

Perhaps you might occasionally strain yourself with some life-damaging behaviour – and when that happens, clear away that strain as fast as possible – and this is best done with meditation. Here is your programme for the rapid unfolding of clear awareness and growth to full human potential.

**TWENTY MINUTES TWICE A DAY, MEDITATE, AND THEN FORGET  
IT. ENJOY LIFE SUPPORTING ACTIVITY DURING THE DAY – AND  
TAKE IT AS IT COMES!**