

Om-Shanti: - Studie en Academie Materiaal
SOUL & CONSCIOUSNESS - Deel 1 - 40

MEDITATION
FOR
SOUL
COMMUNION

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

INTRODUCTION

These Lessons are designed to be used over a 13 week period to introduce you to a process commonly called meditation and to an understanding how the practice of meditation allows you to receive clearer inner guidance in all your life's activities.

These Lessons do not follow any specific meditation discipline or any specific spiritual philosophy. You must be true to yourself and decide for yourself how meditation integrates with your daily activity, family life, and spiritual philosophy.

In all spiritual growth each of us must eagerly and willingly be **SPIRIT-centered**. We must do this through our own free will without coercion or manipulation by others. Whatever choices we make for ourselves, be ever mindful to honor and respect the choices others make for themselves, no matter how different those choices may be from our own.

It is in this spirit that these **MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION** Lessons are presented to you. It is suggested you stay with each lesson and commentary for one week. Practice daily the exercises outlined in each lesson. Keep a regular Journal of your experiences from your daily practice. Sometimes during the day you may get more insights from your daily practice to write in your Journal.

These Lessons can be kept in a loose-leaf, three ring binder. This way you can add blank pages whenever you need more pages for writing your thoughts and experiences relating to your meditation experiences in your Journal.

Love yourself always. Love is the cornerstone of your being.

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson One

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

Prayer is asking, honoring, respecting, praising.

Meditation is an extension to prayer.

Meditation is listening,

Sensing our true connection with SPIRIT!

When we think about nutrition to keep our bodies in good physical condition, we tend to think of water and the basic food groups. Yet, there is one other form of nutrition our bodies need that we can not live without. People have lived for long periods of time without food or water. But the amount of time the ordinary, physical body can not live without **AIR** can be counted in minutes.

The air we breathe is the first and foremost nutrition needed by our physical bodies to remain in good health and alive. Our breathing is an automatic body function so we sometimes forget air is a necessary nutrient to the physical body. The growing awareness of aerobic exercise is a re-awakening to a need to increase our lung capacity to be sure our bodies have more than enough of this vital nutrient.

The second, equally important, function of our lungs is to exhale some of the toxins from our bodies.

There is a form of deep breathing that increases the capacity of our lungs to take in air, also increasing the amount of toxins that are exhaled from our bodies. This deep breathing is called diaphragmatic breathing.

Sitting or standing with the spine in its natural curve assists in taking in a fuller breath. There is a separating wall of muscles and tendons between the chest cavity and the abdominal cavity called the diaphragm. In this deep breathing exercise take in a steady, full breath of air without expanding your rib cage. You will notice your abdomen will push out because your diaphragm is pushing against your intestines in your abdominal cavity.

Fill your lungs with a slow, steady intake of breath this way until you feel your lungs pressing against your rib cage. Then let your ribs expand and raise your shoulders slightly while you continue to take in more air until your lungs feel very full.

Hold that breath of air for a few seconds. Then with the same steady flow, exhale the breath of air from your lungs allowing your rib cage to settle back into position. Toward the end of the breath going out, contract your diaphragm, pull in your rib cage a little tighter, and pull in your shoulders slightly to squeeze more air out of your lungs. Hold in this position for a few seconds. Then repeat the process of inhaling and exhaling this way a few times.

The pauses between inhaling and exhaling are very important to allow your body to adjust to the change of air flow in and out of your lungs. Use diaphragmatic breathing whenever deep breathing is recommended in a lesson.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

Going into the meditative state is done by pulling your attention away from the sights, sounds, and impressions you get from the world around you and becoming more aware of what we might call your inner being. We can start this process with this simple meditative exercise.

1. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Inhale and exhale three or four slow, steady, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
4. Stay quiet. Stay in a quiet state for three, five or more minutes. Whatever you experience during this meditation time, just be aware of it. Don't try to hold on to any experience. Let whatever you experience come to you and let it go when it will.

Be aware of what you are experiencing. What are your thoughts? What emotions do you have? Do you feel any physical sensations? Do you see anything in your mind's eye? Do you hear anything? Do you sense any presence other than yourself?

After you have completed this exercise write in your Journal what you experienced during this meditation time. You can do this exercise once or twice a day for one week. It is recommended you keep a running Journal making notes after each exercise and during the day write other insights you may get from your meditations.

JOURNAL ENTRIES:

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Lesson Two

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

*I give thanks for the silence
When I can sense you more clearly with me*

In our daily lives we have developed regular patterns for eating, sleeping, working, playing and our other activities. These activities generally have two things in common. Usually they occur about the same time of day and in the same place. As you develop your routine for meditation, decide where you will meditate with the least disturbance around you and at times of day when you are least likely to be interrupted. Regular times and the same place to meditate each day helps you to establish this as a regular habit in your daily life patterns. Obviously, meditation should only be done in a safe environment, never while working, playing, driving or in a hazardous situation.

Relaxation of the muscles of the body is another step in the process to go into the meditative state. There are a number of ways to relax the muscles of the body. One way is to slightly tense then relax each muscle. Some people start with the feet by slightly tensing and relaxing their muscles all the way up to the head muscles. Others start at the head and go to the feet.

Another form of muscle relaxation for still others is to imagine a wave of relaxation starting at the crown of the head and slowly reducing tension down all the muscles of the body, allowing this tension to drain away into the earth. Generally, this wave of relaxation is repeated several times. You can try each of these processes and see which might work best for you.

The meditation exercises in these first two lessons have a tendency to reduce stress in your life. The more stress you reduce in your life causes your physical body, your emotions, intuition, and mental abilities to be in better balance and better well being. Reduced stress, better-balanced living, and well being are not the prime objectives of meditation, but they are early, continuing benefits to persons who meditate daily.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve.
3. Close your eyes.
4. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
5. Do a head to toe (or toe to head) muscle relaxation several times.
6. Stay quiet for three to five minutes or more.
7. When finished write out what you experienced in your quiet meditation time. Later, write impressions you receive at other times during the day.

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson Three

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

Be still and know

The human body is in a constant state of change. Even when we are asleep the heart beats, the lungs inhale air and exhale toxins, food continues along the digestive tract, new cells are born, old cells die off. To keep these processes active, the body maintains a continual flow of energy. The brain's energy changes are traceable by an EEG machine, or an electrocardiogram machine can trace the heart's energy changes.

There is a form of energy that flows freely in and out of the body that is our life force. Some call it prana. We can call it universal energy. It is never ending, and always with us wherever we are. Universal energy flows constantly up and down the spinal column. When your spinal column is in its natural curve and your head is directly above your spinal column, this universal energy flows most freely. You can get a sense of this universal energy flow for yourself.

Sit with your back straight up, your spinal column in its natural curve, and your head held directly over your spinal column. Then close your eyes. Inhale and exhale three deep, diaphragmatic breaths. Let the muscles of your body relax, but keep just enough tension in the muscles along the spinal column to keep it upright in its natural curve.

Then put your attention, and keep your attention, to the area at the base of your spine. Within a few minutes you can sense the universal energy at the base of your spine. You can sense it slowly moving up along your spine and into your brain cavity. This universal energy is an important part of your meditation experience toward greater understanding of your own inner wisdom.

You assist this free flow of universal energy by keeping your spinal column in its natural curve with your head held directly above your spine when you are meditating.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids.
4. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
5. Do a head to toe (or toe to head) muscle relaxation several times.
6. Stay quiet for three to five minutes or more.
7. When finished, write out what you experienced in your quiet meditation time. Later, write the insights you get at other times during the day.

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson Four

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

*The qualities we see in others
Are a reflection of these qualities in ourselves*

Another way of assisting the process of relaxation for meditation is to do simple muscle tensing, then releasing exercises, torso bends and the like combined with deep breathing for three to five minutes just before preparing to meditate. These should be very low exertion exercises. The object for these exercises is simply to limber up a bit, not aerobics that speed up the heart action.

Besides the breathing exercises and muscle relaxation for stress reduction, it is important that we each empower ourselves by learning more about good nutrition habits and learning how to prepare and eat well balanced meals for better physical health.

It is obvious that addictive habits like smoking, alcohol and drug abuse need to be avoided by persons who are serious about meditation. Addictive substances can cause harmful physical effects to your body. Alcohol and drug abuse may cause distressing side effects, bad 'trips', as you get into deeper and deeper meditative states. If you are going to continue meditation as a regular practice in your daily life, it is best to stop all alcohol and drug abuse.

It is recommended that persons with serious psychological, emotional and mental problems be in and remain in counseling with a qualified therapist if they are going to add meditation as a regular daily practice in their lives. Meditation can accelerate discovery of the hidden or root causes for many problems. It is always best to have a therapist you trust and rely upon to discuss and process the hidden or root causes of your personal conflicts that may come to you through meditation.

It is said, 'the eyes are the windows of the soul'. Another habit that assists an easy flow of universal energies up the spine and in the cranial cavity is to have your eyes focused upward when you meditate. Care should be taken not to have your eyes forced upward too far because that will put a strain on your eye muscles and be very painful. Here is a simple exercise to assist you to focus your eyes upward.

Place a chair in your room with its back up against one wall. Sit in this chair facing the far wall with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly over your spine. Look straight ahead. Then move your eyes straight up to the place where the wall meets the ceiling (or a spot somewhat lower, if it is a small room). Focus your eyes on this spot. As your eyelids grow heavy, continue to look where the spot is, but allow your eyelids to close.

This procedure generally allows you to focus your eyes upward without muscle strain. If you feel any discomfort or pain while doing this, stop the process immediately. If any eye discomfort or pain is ever experienced, always have your eyes checked by a qualified professional. In the meditative exercise for this lesson, eyes focused upward will be added to the process for going into the meditative state.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with you spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids with eyes focused upward without discomfort or muscle strain.
4. Do three or four slow, deep diaphragmatic breaths.
5. Do a head to toe (or toe to head) muscle relaxation several times.
6. Stay quiet for three to five minutes or more.
7. When finished write out what you experience in your quiet meditation time. Later, write the insights you get at other times during the day.

JOURNAL ENTRIES:

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson Five

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

*Go within, without
Claim your star, claim all
Life's great adventure
To discover the divinity you are*

When we are awake, we are aware of, we are conscious of what is going on around us. Our five senses -sight, touch, taste, smell and hearing- are actively giving us impressions that our mind can respond to. We can call this part of our mind our waking consciousness. While we are awake our waking consciousness is ever alert to what is going on around us, to our emotions, and to our thoughts. In our waking world there is space, there is time, and there is solidity.

In contrast, when we are asleep our waking consciousness is no longer active, even though we occupy the same physical space. A special feature when we are asleep is our dreams. We have a dream consciousness when we are asleep. And in our dream consciousness, space, time and solidity, either do not exist, or they exist in a much different way. In our dreams we can be in one place in one moment, then in an entirely different place another moment. We can go through things without resistance, if we choose to. Our dream consciousness is far more creative and spontaneous than our waking consciousness.

In meditation, we are in a combination of being awake and in a dream state. This means our minds are using a combination of waking consciousness and dream consciousness. When we close our eyes and relax, our waking consciousness finds itself with very little to do. You may find yourself thinking about different things that are happening in your life and what to do about these things. We can call this 'mind chatter'.

A normal function of your waking mind is to take in details of the world around you, and how this affects you. When meditating you are still in the waking state. But you have turned your attention away from the activity going on around you. So your waking mind having no outside details to take in, allows past events to be replayed in your waking mind.

You can get your waking mind to cooperate with your meditation time by focusing your attention on some simple details. In some meditation disciplines, the attention is focused on your breath coming in and going out through the nostrils. Or you can do what some call 'word focus' and others call a 'mantra'. This is done by mentally repeating, over and over, a simple word or phrase with a strong spiritual meaning to you. Some people combine breath focus and word focus together. When the breath comes in, think a word or part of a phrase. When the breath goes out, they think another word or the remainder of the phrase. Still others imagine colors or some symbol having deep meaning in their lives.

You can try any of these things or a combination of things to find out what works for you. Rather than resist your mind's normal waking tendencies, you can find out how your mind cooperates best with your meditation experiences. You can try other ways to assist your mind to enter into deeper meditative patterns with you.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids with your eyes focused upward without muscle strain.
4. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
5. Do your full body muscle relaxation.
6. Without controlling your breath, do breath focus, or word focus, or whatever works for you to help still your mind chatter.
7. Stay quiet. Meditate for three to five minutes or more.
8. When finished write out what you experienced in meditation. Later, write insights you receive at other times during the day.

JOURNAL ENTRIES:

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Lesson Six

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

*Can I awaken to light
Know Soul's desire
Can I go beyond
This veil of darkness, separation
What is this whisper
Go within, go within Beloved*

Many therapists and researchers arbitrarily divide the mind into a conscious mind and a sub-conscious mind. The conscious mind is primarily focused on our waking consciousness, our ego structure, our personality, with work, study, play, beliefs and survival. But our conscious mind is but the tip of the iceberg.

The subconscious mind has many more layers. One layer has to do with automatic body functions like heartbeat, breathing, digestion, elimination, and temperature control. There's a layer of emotions like love, hate, disgust, joy, peace, jealousy, happiness, family ties. Fight or flight and other response mechanisms is still another layer. We have a layer of mental tools of imagination, intellect, will, memory, fantasy and reasoning. And deeper still are the psychic forces of dreams, intuition, hunches, clairvoyance (inner vision), clairaudience (inner hearing), and clairsentience (inner knowing).

Mind and dream researchers have discovered there is a certain range of brain waves given off during our waking time. They call this the beta state. And when we are very relaxed, musing, or with eyes closed, dozing, sleeping, there is another range of brain waves putting us in what is called the alpha state. And even deeper levels of sleep, or comatose conditions can produce a range of brain waves of what is called the delta state.

In meditation, particularly for beginners, we are generally in the alpha state. And deeper meditations can take us to the delta state. It is in the alpha and delta states of meditation where we consciously become aware of our subconscious mind powers of intuition, clairvoyance, clairaudience, and clairsentience. As in the dream state -time, space and solidity- are no longer constants when we meditate. We can see, hear and know things not usually available to our conscious mind. In meditation we get ever nearer to our psyche, or soul level of communication.

Part of your meditative process now includes focusing your eyes upward without muscle strain and with your eyelids closed. When you are in the alpha state in meditation, there is a phenomenon called eye-closure. What eye-closure means is that in the alpha state you, ordinarily, can not open your eyelids. They are locked shut. Experiment with eye-closure during your meditations for the next week or so. Eye-closure is a good test to find out if you are in a true meditative state.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids with your eyes focused upward without muscle strain.
4. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
5. Do your full body muscle relaxation.
6. Without controlling your breath, do breathe focus, or word focus, or whatever works for you to help still the mind chatter.
7. Stay quiet. Meditate for three to five minutes or more.
8. Check for eye-closure once or twice during your meditation time.
9. When finished write out what you experienced in meditation. Later, write insights you receive at other times during the day.

JOURNAL ENTRIES

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson Seven

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

Meditation
Life breath of the soul
Essence of Spirit
Flowing in the silence
Transforming the limited self
Into everlasting Light

You have already been introduced to the idea of air as a necessary form of nutrition for the body and with diaphragmatic breathing. There is a whole science of breath control to keep the body in optimum physical condition. Aerobics and sports are ways for us to increase our lung capacity and make the lungs more efficient. The science of breath control, generally, offers much simpler, less strenuous ways to achieve the same results.

Another simple, deep breathing exercise that can slowly expand your lung efficiency can be done every day while walking, sitting, or doing any task that does not require much concentration. Start by taking in a steady breath to the count of four. Hold your breath to a count of two. Exhale the breath to a count of four. Then hold the breath to a count of two. Repeat this pattern for several minutes.

You will notice the periods of holding your breath is half as long as the periods for inhaling and exhaling. This is the important pattern for this breath exercise -the count of inhaling and exhaling is twice the count for holding the breath. If you can comfortably inhale and exhale to a count of six and hold to a count of three, it's OK to start with this pattern. But if at any time, you find yourself straining during the breathing exercise, just lower your counts.

You might want to start out with a four, two, four, two count every day. Then in a few days do the six, three, six, three count just one or two times at the end of your breathing exercise. Every few days do some more six, three, six, three counts until your whole breathing pattern for this exercise is a comfortable six, three, six, three pattern. A few days later you can start doing eight, four, eight, four breaths at the end of your exercise period, and so on.

An experimenter put some fleas in a glass enclosure. Halfway up the enclosure walls the experimenter taped a piece of fitted glass forming a closed ceiling. At first, fleas would jump up and hit the glass ceiling. After a while they got smart. They held back, limiting the height of their jumps to just below the glass ceiling.

The glass ceiling was removed after all the fleas had stopped hitting it when they jumped. Amazingly, no flea jumped above the height when the glass ceiling was in place. They thought it was still there. The fleas had created a belief system about their ceiling. And they continued this belief, even after their ceiling had been removed.

In our own lives, we hit glass ceilings of one kind and another. These can be financial, relationships, goal-oriented, emotional, religious, or any variety of ceilings. When we hit these ceilings we pull back a little, we limit ourselves to our comfort zone. We create for ourselves a belief system from our experiences. Or we might accept another person's or another group's belief system. When we accept a belief system, it becomes an active force in our lives. We find ourselves unable to go beyond the limits of the beliefs we've accepted.

Each of us is a divine aspect of one SPIRIT by whatever name we refer to SPIRIT. Our soul forces are the common and direct link each person has with SPIRIT and with each other. In meditations we close out what seem external forces. We become aware of direct communication, direct guidance from our soul forces. We must, however, believe this is possible for us to do. If we do not believe this is possible, then our glass ceiling of belief will generally limit what we can experience in meditation.

We always have free will. How we act upon the guidance and communication from our soul forces is an individual choice. There is no mandate from SPIRIT to do something that does not feel right for us to do.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids with your eyes focused upward without muscle strain.
4. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
5. Do your full body muscle relaxation.
6. Without controlling your breath, do breath focus, or word focus, or whatever works for you to help still the mind chatter.
7. Meditate for three to five minutes or more.
8. Check for eye-closure once or twice during your meditation time, if you choose.
9. When finished write out what you experienced in meditation, and then write insights you receive at other times during the day.

JOURNAL ENTRIES

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson Eight

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

*There is a peace
That passes all understanding*

There are some people who believe the purpose of meditation is to experience only peace. And if that is your belief, it is more than likely that is what you'll experience while you are meditating. But this is a limiting belief. It puts conditions on what meditation is and can be for you. And the peace you'll experience will be a limited peace.

In our life experiences there are things that happen to us that can upset us, be traumatic to us, cause us to behave in unpredictable ways, or cause us to have fears, emotional, psychological or mental problems. Sometimes the root causes of these things have long been forgotten, or are hidden so deep in our subconscious mind that we block out recall.

Within our own being there are psychological regulators. There is an 'inner wisdom' which knows when it is OK for us to start to look at, to experience again the root cause of some life problem. In meditation you may begin to get feelings that indicate you are going to experience some emotional or mental stress. When these feelings begin to surface, it is best to let them surface within you while meditating and stay with them as long as you can. Anytime you feel you've had enough for that meditation simply let go of the feelings and come out of the meditative state.

Each time you do this you are cleansing away some of the root causes of one of your life problems. If you feel like crying during these times, go ahead and cry, or get angry, or whatever emotion surfaces. Acknowledge your emotions. This kind of experience in meditation is called cleansing. Denying your emotions simply keeps the root causes of any problem you may be experiencing still buried within your being.

Obviously, if you are experiencing deep distress in meditation, it is important for you to seek professional counseling. If you experience deep distress in meditation, you and your counselor should discuss whether it's best for you to continue your daily meditations, or to use some other course of action to clear yourself of this distress before returning to your daily meditations.

Each time you experience a cleansing in your meditations you open yourself up to deeper levels of meditative experiences. You also open yourself to a far greater sense of peace and well-being than you can ever have by denying any of your emotions during meditation. Love yourself. Love your emotions. Your emotions are great servants assisting you to keep your life in balance.

Prayers and affirmations while going into meditation are excellent ways to contact your inner wisdom to assist you to experience those things that will help clear you of internal imbalances. Prayers and affirmations can be very specific to bring you to a state of physical, emotional, mental or psychic well being. Or a general prayer or affirmation can be used. Before you start your meditation, decide what specific end result you want to achieve. Then put this into a positive prayer or affirmation like, "I am always guided to a state of excellent physical and spiritual well-being." Or you can use a general prayer or affirmation like, "Let me experience those things that are for my greatest and highest good." These are only suggestions. Follow your heart. Create your own prayer or affirmation. In this lesson, a prayer or affirmation will be added to your process for going into the meditative state.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids with your eyes focused upward without muscle strain.
4. Say a prayer or affirmation for this meditation, or use a general one for your greatest and highest good.
5. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
6. Do your full body muscle relaxation.
7. Without controlling your breath, do breath focus, or word focus, or whatever works for you to help still the mind chatter.
8. Meditate for three to five minutes or more.
9. Check for eye-closure once or twice during your meditation time, if you choose.
10. When finished write out what you experienced in meditation. Later, write insights you receive at other times during the day.

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MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson Nine

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

*My body is a living temple
Where I walk is holy ground
What I do is sacred service
I am one with you, with all creation*

We often hear or see the phrase 'body, mind and spirit' to refer to all of our being. Upon examination, we find this phrase is faulty in two respects. First, it does not acknowledge our emotions or our soul forces, our psyche. Second, and most important, it is faulty because it puts SPIRIT as a separate aspect of our being, as though our body was one thing, our mind another, and SPIRIT yet another thing. SPIRIT is a divine essence of all our body cells and parts. SPIRIT is a divine essence of all levels of mind functions and consciousness. SPIRIT is a divine essence of our emotions, soul forces, psyche, and every, EVERY aspect of our being. We simply would not exist if we were not SPIRIT.

There is no separation of matter and SPIRIT. Matter is SPIRIT expressing at different vibratory rates with specific intents, qualities and traits. There is no separation of body and SPIRIT, nor mental attributes and SPIRIT. To say 'matter and SPIRIT', or 'body, mind and SPIRIT' is to continue the illusion of separation.

Spiritual growth is not the learning of prayers, or meditation, or rituals, or transcendence from the earth experience. It is not the denial of the existence of our bodies, egos, emotions, personalities, rational thoughts, intellect, or the myriad components that make up our human experience. Spiritual growth is our increasing awareness that SPIRIT exists in all earth forms, all actions, all attributes found in or out of the earth experience.

All things that manifest in the earth experience as matter have an aura around them. The aura is the transformer for the more powerful, subtler energies of SPIRIT to manifest as the grosser energies of matter. In our ordinary experience, we sense ourselves as being separate human beings. This is because we focus our attention on our human qualities as being predominant. In our spiritual growth, we can come to recognize our auric field. This can lead us to recognize there are many aspects of our auric field wherein lay our latent, dormant powers, experiences in other dimensions, and a host of other creative forces just vaguely felt by us in our understanding at this time.

Indeed, each of us is a human-divine being. And we can come to recognize our true divine nature when we realize we have an unlimited auric field which includes our human nature.

Once we attune ourselves to our divine nature, we can no longer sense ourselves as beings separate from one another. We no longer feel separate from SPIRIT, for our consciousness is continually bathed in the Presence of SPIRIT. Our beingness, our will is forever at one with the Will of SPIRIT. We do not lose our individuality, but rather we become more fully aware of our special energies as an integral and necessary aspect of the creative forces of SPIRIT.

Meditation is a state of being, or awareness, or consciousness, through which we can attune ourselves to our own aspect of divinity, of the one SPIRIT that flows through each of us, through all creation. Indeed, one SPIRIT is each of us. One SPIRIT is all of creation.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

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2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids with your eyes focused upward without muscle strain.
4. Say a prayer or affirmation for this meditation, or use a general one for your greatest and highest good.
5. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
6. Do your full body muscle relaxation.
7. Without controlling your breath, do breath focus, or word focus, or whatever works for you to help still the mind chatter.
8. Meditate for three to five minutes or more.
9. Check for eye-closure once or twice during your meditation time, if you choose.
10. When finished, write out what you experienced in meditation. Later, write insights you receive at other times during the day.

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MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson Ten

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

*There are more things in heaven and earth
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy*

Matter is a form of SPIRIT. Space, time and solidness are constants in the world of matter. Mobility in space, through air and in water, is achieved through various means. Humans, animals, insects walk, birds fly, fish swim. Cars, planes, spacecraft, boats provide even more mobility. Yet none of these goes through solid matter without removing, displacing or destroying that matter.

There are, however, many other worlds or dimensions where space, time, and solidness are not constants. The ones we are most familiar with are emotions, mental powers, and dreams. Any of these can be triggered instantly, transcending space, time and solidness. In our dream world, the activity is quite different from our waking world. Yet, both take place in what we call the same physical space.

In our physical space are parallel dimensions or worlds that exist at different frequencies than our solid, matter filled, waking world. The two frequencies (often called planes) of activity nearest our world of matter are the astral plane and the etheric plane. The astral plane is of subtler frequencies than the plane of matter we are most familiar with. And the etheric plane is of subtler frequencies still to the astral plane. And beyond these are more planes of still much subtler frequencies.

Our common dream world, our mental, emotional processes, and our meditations generally take place in the astral and etheric planes of activity. Space, time and solidness are not constants in the astral and etheric planes. The illusion of space, time or solidness can be created there, or shapes can be altered at will. Activity can happen instantaneously. And a special feature of these planes is 'throughness', meaning one form can go through another form without impact, displacement or destruction to either form.

Different alpha states allow us to tune in to various levels of astral or etheric activity. This is similar to changing stations or channels of our radio or TV which allows us to view and hear other stations or activity occurring at different frequencies, vibrations, waves, or oscillations. Thought is like the remote control for our electronic equipment. In alpha states, thought and other mind powers can move us instantly to experience various levels of astral or etheric activity.

Some persons trained in the sciences or scientific method have great difficulty with the concept of mind consciousness, other planes of existence and subtler spirit energies because they can not devise scientific tests to 'prove' their existence that gives them the same results each time. Scientific dream researchers for instance, have for many years conducted research about sleep, focusing on body functions and brain wave activity while sleeping.

These scientists know everyone dreams. They know when dream recall is strongest. They know dreaming can happen twenty-four hours a day. They know our humanness malfunctions when we are not allowed to dream for extended periods of time. And they know that we recoup ourselves back to normal functions when we are once more allowed to dream. Yet with all this sleep and dream research, only a very few 'scientists' focus on the dream material itself because the dream material does not follow any of the physical rules they are familiar with.

Dreams fall in the realm of mind consciousness which ever deals with unique, creative activity, not duplicated activity which scientists are fond of. Dreams are more of an art form, than scientific exploration. The way to 'know' about your dreams and any spiritual growth activity is by E-X-P-E-R-I-E-N-C-E! Yes, the key to knowing what dreams, meditation, mind consciousness, soul communion, astral travel, etheric travel, and the like are -is simply by your own experience with these things. And your experience will always be creatively unique to you. These things are part of what we refer to as spiritual growth, a reaching to understand the nature of SPIRIT in us. The creative forces of SPIRIT are unique in each person. There are as many spiritual paths as there are persons in the world. Your spiritual path is unique to you. Meditation assists you to find and remain aligned with your unique, spiritual path.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids with your eyes focused upward without muscle strain.
4. Say a prayer or affirmation for this meditation, or use a general one for your greatest and highest good.
5. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
6. Do your full body muscle relaxation.
7. Without controlling your breath, do breath focus, or word focus, or whatever works for you to help still the mind chatter.
8. Meditate for three to five minutes or more.
9. Check for eye-closure once or twice during your meditation time, if you choose.
10. When finished write out what you experienced in meditation. Later, write insights you receive at other times during the day.

JOURNAL ENTRIES

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson Eleven

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

*If your eye is single
Your whole body is full of light*

When your eyelids are closed, you can experience a variety of visual sensations. These visual sensations are different from looking at the world around you with your eyelids open. Some people may experience only color emanations, or a sense of movement of dark or color masses. Others experience scenes as though looking at a TV screen inside their heads. Still others pick up visual scenes and find themselves in them, as part of the activity. However the visuals may manifest for you in meditation, this is called clairvoyance or clear seeing.

There are two glands attached to the brain in the cranial cavity behind the forehead called the pineal gland and the pituitary gland. Both of these glands have specific functions related to our physical bodies. But universal energy flowing over these glands causes a vibration between them that allows us to access directly the astral and etheric planes of our dream world and meditation experiences. This phenomenon is referred to by various expressions like 'second sight', 'inner eye', 'mind's eye', 'single eye', or 'spiritual eye'.

When you focus your eyes upward in meditation, with your eyelids closed, you are putting your attention, your awareness, to this area behind your forehead. Your awareness to this area assists in creating a greater flow of universal energy to this area, which further activates your clairvoyant ability.

There is another process similar to prayer and affirmations that can assist you toward deeper and more meaningful meditations. This process is called visualization. Visualization can be used to assist you in seeing your world in a different way, or to solve problems in your life, or for healing purposes. In general, how this is done is to use your imagination, which is a powerful meditative tool, to see things as you would want them to be. Then other parts of your subconscious mind will cooperate toward that end result. You must understand, this does not happen instantly when you first start to visualize. An athlete does not become a star after one or two attempts. In the same way, all meditative activity must be practiced continually to bring about the desired results.

When doing your daily meditations this week, you can try a simple visualization called the 'Expanding Light Meditation'. When you are in the meditative state, sense within your being, within the center of your being, a pinpoint of brilliant light. Take your time to sense this pinpoint of brilliance. Recognize this is your own brilliance, your own aspect of divinity. Become one with this brilliance. Sense the joy and the love within this pinpoint of brilliance. As you begin to feel your oneness with this pinpoint of brilliant light, then sense it expanding slightly and filling more of your being.

Stay with the expanded light for a few moments, then sense it expanding still more, starting to fill your physical body. Stay with this further expanded brilliant light force for a few moments, then sense it filling your entire body, your emotions, your mental abilities, your psychic forces. Take your time. Allow its light, love, joy and peace to penetrate all of your human beingness.

When this is done, sense this brilliance expanding further still to fill the room you're in, penetrating everything within the room. Sense your oneness with everything in your room. Then allow the brilliant light to expand even more to fill up and light up your whole house, everyone and everything in it. Feel the oneness, the love for these things.

Allow the brilliant light to expand again to include your entire community and when you feel your oneness with this, then expand again to your region, and again to your country. Expand again to your planet, and yet again, again, again to your solar system, its universe and beyond, to include all of creation. With each expansion, revel in the expanded brilliance, in the expanded love, in the expanded joy, in the expanded oneness.

After the final expansion, stay there for awhile. Then slowly allow the size of your brilliance to diminish, first from all that is to your universe, then from your universe to your solar system, slowly still from your solar system to your planet, and from your planet to your community, your house, your room, your physical body. Sense that as the size diminishes it does not lose any of its brilliance, or love, or joy, or peace. Let the brilliance diminish to the pinpoint of self you started out with.

In time, you may come to recognize this pinpoint of brilliant light with its ability to encompass all of creation is who you truly are. Let your light shine out, into the world around you.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids with your eyes focused upward without muscle strain.
4. Say a prayer or affirmation for this meditation, or use a general one for your greatest and highest good.
5. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
6. Do your full body muscle relaxation.
7. Without controlling your breathe, do breathe focus, or word focus, or whatever works for you to help still the mind chatter.
8. Stay quiet and do the Expanding Light Meditation.
9. Check for eye-closure once or twice during your meditation time, if you choose.
10. When finished write out what you experienced in meditation. Later, write insights you receive at other times during the day.

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson Twelve

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

*Spiritual Growth
Is the ever-growing realization
We are always one with Spirit*

Our psyche, our soul forces are the most direct awareness we have as human beings with our true nature as a divine essence of the one SPIRIT. Through our soul forces we can be in direct communication with SPIRIT. We can become more increasingly aware of the great love SPIRIT has for each of us. We can become aware of the will of SPIRIT ever offering us universal peace, joy, love, and all-knowingness.

As long as our focus is primarily on our human beingness, we have a feeling of separation from one another. We have a feeling of limitation. We allow ourselves a variety of territorial disputes and various conflicts with each other through this belief of separateness from one another.

But if we allow ourselves to open up to our divine essence, our divine beingness, as the true focus of who we are, we begin to open up to our interconnection with one another. Territorial disputes and conflicts, in general, begin to dissipate as we come to understand that each of us has an important role to perform as part of SPIRIT's offer of universal peace, love, joy and all-knowingness.

No universal peace is ever possible without including each one of us, every single human being. Our love, our joy, our knowingness is limited as long as we focus on our humanness. The transition to identifying mostly with our divine essence happens as our human personalities freely, willingly, joyfully and lovingly become SPIRIT-centered in all our life activities.

Soul communion is our direct link with SPIRIT. Soul communion is intimate communication with our soul forces. And this is accomplished by filtering our awareness through different layers of our mind consciousness, from our ordinary waking consciousness through various levels of subconscious mind activity. In meditation and in the meditative states communication, communion to and from our soul forces can be easily filtered through the various levels of our consciousness.

It must also be understood that the nature of communication with our soul forces is different from communicating from person to person. Language is a slow and limiting process for communicating. It is said, 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. And beyond pictures is concepts, sensory perceptions, telepathic linkages, memory linkages, and other linkages we can only vaguely sense. Consciousness is a powerful communicator. Both our waking mind and soul forces have consciousness. At ordinary levels they are always in communication. In meditation, we have a fuller awareness of this communication, this communion.

And what are your soul forces telling you?

Sometimes, impressions will come through to you so strongly you'll recognize instantly what they mean. At other times you get very mixed messages, or don't know at all what is meant by the visuals and other impressions you are receiving. As a continuing exercise, you can start to develop your own Soul Communion Dictionary. To do this, start with your own Journal impressions from Lesson One that you wrote down. Go over one page each day. Read each page, then write down your overall feeling for what you wrote on that page. Then look at each thing you wrote about as having one or more hidden meanings or free associations.

For instance, you may have encountered a beautiful butterfly in meditation. What would a butterfly suggest to you? Free spirited? Delicate? Fear? Each of us will react differently to the same symbol and come up with different free associations. Since all your imagery came from your own inner wisdom, the symbolic meaning will come from your own experience with whatever visual or sensory impressions you have. As you develop your Soul Communion Dictionary, you'll then be able to decipher, to understand your meditation experiences more quickly.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids with your eyes focused upward without muscle strain.
4. Say a prayer or affirmation for this meditation, or use a general one for your greatest and highest good.
5. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
6. Do your full body muscle relaxation.
7. Without controlling your breath, do breath focus, or word focus, or whatever works for you to help still the mind chatter.
8. Meditate for three to five minutes or more.
9. Check for eye-closure once or twice during your meditation time, if you choose.
10. When finished write out what you experienced in meditation. Later, write insights you receive at other times during the day.
11. Start your own personal Soul Communion Dictionary.

JOURNAL ENTRIES

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Lesson Thirteen

Week Ending _____

Commentary:

*Spirit sees in secret
And rewards you openly*

When a person's body dies and is no longer functional, the person's soul forces continue to exist in other dimensions like the astral plane, etheric plane and other subtler dimensions. Soul travel between these planes is much easier without a body. But without a body, soul travel to the earth plane, the plane of matter, is not so easy.

While we are in body, we are part of a team that includes other souls that were once in body as we are. And sometimes there are souls in your team that have never been in body. The souls never in body are sometimes called angels. The souls that were once in body are often called Spirit Guides. Angels and Spirit Guides can move through other planes more freely than you. Their access to information for problem solving and to healing energies is useful to you while you are in your body. During meditation you may feel a presence, but no one in body is near you. Or you may get a visual of a face or some full figured person. Or you may find yourself being tickled or have other sensations as though someone else was doing these things to you.

When these things happen, it's more than likely that part of your team of Spirit Guides or Angels is trying to get your attention, trying to get you to recognize them. Understand that free will is a universal constant. And your Spirit Guides and Angels will not give you guidance, information or assist you in any way unless you ASK for assistance.

When you sense Angels or Spirit Guides are trying to get your attention, acknowledge them. Ask who they are. Ask in what ways they are willing to assist you. Remember, they too, have free will. And when you feel a contact is made with Spirit Guides or Angels, thank them for their guidance and assistance.

At first there might be a little timidity on your part to be mentally talking to disembodied souls. Just remember your true nature, that part of you that continues after the death of your body is your soul. That is what you truly are. And once you recognize that you are a soul talking to another soul, your timidity will gradually go away. You will sense yourself as an equal talking to other equals. That is the way your Spirit Guides and Angels see their relationship to you, as equals communicating with equals.

Be open to the marvelous experiences you can have as you continue your daily meditations. Let your team of Spirit Guides and Angels play the game of life with you. They will add great sparkle, energy, joy, love, peace and creativity to you life.

MEDITATIVE EXERCISE FOR THIS WEEK

1. Choose a regular place and times to meditate daily.
2. Sit or lie in a comfortable position with your spine in its natural curve and your head directly above your spine.
3. Close your eyelids with your eyes focused upward without muscle strain.
4. Say a prayer or affirmation for this meditation, or use a general one for your greatest and highest good.
5. Do three or four slow, deep, diaphragmatic breaths.
6. Do your full body muscle relaxation.
7. Without controlling your breath, do breath focus, or word focus, or whatever works for you to help still the mind chatter.
8. Meditate for three to five minutes or more.
9. Check for eye-closure once or twice during your meditation time, if you choose.
10. When finished write out what you experienced in meditation. Later, write insights you receive at other times during the day.
11. Continue developing your personal Soul Communion Dictionary.
12. Become familiar with and play with your Spirit Guides and Angels.

JOURNAL ENTRIES

MEDITATION FOR SOUL COMMUNION

Postscript

Have you been true to the Lessons in your personal journey?

Have you spent at least a week trying to understand more fully the commentaries in each lesson?

Have you practiced the meditation exercises recommended in each lesson every day for at least a week?

Have you recorded your experiences from practicing these exercises and other insights these exercises have brought to you during the day?

If you have done these things, then you have a true beginning understanding of the great benefits available to you through meditation for soul communion. You are developing a habit that is well worth continuing in your daily routine for self-empowerment, for guidance from your own inner wisdom, from your own soul forces.

There are as many spiritual paths as there are human beings. Each of us is on our own unique, spiritual path. True spiritual growth comes only through our own personal experiences. The divine essence flows through each of us every moment of every day and assists us in our daily activity. Through meditation, through your own soul communion, you are in direct communication with this divine essence.

Let your inner wisdom, that brightly shining beacon, be your guide to direct you in your earth activities. Let your LIGHT shine brightly through all the days of your life.

The Love and Blessings of the universe are with you always.

Parting Gift Bonus: Group energy enhances personal meditations. Meditating with others in a Spiritual Growth Circle once a week will greatly enhance your personal meditations. You can pull together your own Spiritual Growth Circle with this technique. It works!

SPIRITUAL GROWTH CIRCLE

When two or more come together, there am I in the midst of them

A Spiritual Growth Circle is a coming together of two or more persons to gain insights or personal guidance through meditation, meditative states and dreamwork.

You are encouraged to pull together in your own home a Spiritual Growth Circle of relatives and friends to come together once every week for meditation, sharing what is experienced during the meditation, then discussing what was shared with each other. This simple process is a powerful tool for learning greater trust in our own personal guidance, and to empower ourselves more in all our life activities.

Private meditations allow us to get more in touch with our own personal guidance, our inner forces. Group meditations tend to increase the experiences and understanding we can gain through meditation.

The Spiritual Growth Circle insights carry over during the week to encourage and to enhance our personal meditations.

A Spiritual Growth Circle can start out with a simple, non-directed meditation of three to five minutes. This is often called a centering meditation. After each person has returned to full, waking consciousness after the centering meditation, then each person in turn can share what was experienced during the centering meditation. It is recommended there be no interruptions or questions from others during the sharing time.

The purpose for not interrupting during the sharing time is threefold. First, we honor the person who is willing to share an experience with us. Second, during the sharing a person retreats somewhat into the meditative state re-experiencing what is being shared. The third purpose is to discipline ourselves to truly listen to what another person is sharing with us. Too often when others are sharing with us, we are very busy thinking about what we want to say. Whatever you don't understand about what a person is sharing with you can be asked about during the general discussion time following the sharing.

After everyone has shared their meditative experiences, then there can be an open discussion on the meditative experiences just shared with each other. This discussion often brings out common threads of experiences and tends to add more meaning to the meditative experiences. This is also a time to ask for more clarity from others about their shared experiences during the meditative exercise. Try to keep the general discussion focused on the shared meditative experiences.

After the centering meditation discussion is complete, the people in the group can choose a specific focus for the next meditation. The focus can be a meditative exercise that someone in the group knows, or sensing energy flows in the body as might be used in energy healing. The exercise can be focusing on something that happened or was said during the sharing or discussion that just ended. Or someone might have a dream experience that the person would like more insight into the dream's meaning. Simple questions on a topic of interest to every one can be a focus for the meditative exercise.

Each meditative exercise follows the same pattern as the centering meditation. Three to five minutes of meditation. Then sharing without interruption from the group. And ending with a discussion about the information just shared about the meditation experience. It is strongly recommended that each person have a glass of water beside them during this time. Taking small sips of water during the evening enhances the flow of activity during the meditative times.

Whatever happens to any person during the meditative exercise is valid for that person and needs to be honored by the others in the group. However, every other person in the group must decide for themselves whether any experience shared is valid for them. We all have different focuses in our lives. A meditation experience might be specific to our focus of activity, and not for others.

A Spiritual Growth Circle can usually complete three or four meditative exercises with sharing and discussion during a two hour period. It is recommended that Spiritual Growth Circles limit their practice time to two hours or less, once each week. Daily personal meditations between group meditations are very important to gain trust in our own guidance. The group can not validate our experiences. Each person must do that for one's self.

Once you have a clear understanding of what you want to do in life, the Universe will bend its efforts toward that end. Be careful, however, not to expect the Universe to fall into your time frame for the accomplishment of your goal. To the Universal forces a word like 'soon' can mean the next instant or the next millennium.

LOVE YOURSELF ALWAYS! Love is the cornerstone of your being.