

## The Experience of Meditation

**There are many different experiences of meditation** - none of which are better or worse than each other, they are personal experiences. It's also very likely that we will not come across any of these experiences! Much of the information here can be found in the excellent book by Jessica Macbeth *Moon Over Water*. Her book *Sun Over Mountain* is a super introduction to guided imagery.

I discovered a biofeedback program recently, endorsed by Deepak Chopra, which I found to be a fantastic way to practice meditation at home, being taught by experienced teachers. My granddaughter loves it! It is a lovely introduction to the art of meditation, there is an excellent demo which gives the flavour of the journey : *The Wild Divine* trailer.

**In the first stages of meditation a feeling of euphoria or bliss** may be felt - this wears off over time. People can also experience visions, lights or music, this can tend to distract our attention from our focus. If you observe the phenomena closely, but like your thoughts, do not become attached or involved, they will be allowed to fade away. If you experience them, think of them as markers along the way. These experiences indicate change, and can be valued for that and released.

**Sometimes, when people have been very tense**, the relaxation can bring emotions to the surface. This may be anger, sadness, or crying. There is no need to try to identify where the emotion is coming from, it very likely will not be coming from any tangible cause, but from locked up experiences from the past. All we need to do is recognise them, allow them and release them.

**Similar to emotional release**, muscular release can result in twitches or jerks. These are virtually never painful, but may be unfamiliar to us. They are probably just old tensions letting go and the energy in the body rebalancing.

**If any of these experiences should concern you** - here are some exercises for reducing them.

- Get a good rest every night - go to bed and get up at reasonable and regular hours.
- Eat sensible food regularly - no extreme diets.
- Get plenty of healthy exercise. If you are not used to exercise, introduce it gently and gradually - working in the garden or country walks are good.
- Don't use drugs, even prescribed ones, unless they are essential to health. Drugs can make you feel even more weird and confused, give your body a chance to find a healthy balance.
- Meditate fifteen minutes a day. No more, no less. This helps to stabilise and moderate the rate of change and release.
- Practise earthing and centring exercises every day. The stronger the sensations, the more the exercises are needed.
- Don't get excited about the sensations, and don't become attached to the idea that they mean that you are doing something wonderful. They are just mileposts to tell you that you are changing and becoming a more relaxed person.

**After meditating for some time many people notice increased intuition.** With regular meditation our minds gradually begin to clear themselves of some of their chaos and babble, so we sense subtle perceptions more clearly and frequently, (such as knowing who is on the phone, or that someone is about to change the subject and what to, coincidences and synchronicities). This is perfectly natural, though we do need to remember that the same gap exists between perception and understanding that exists in the ordinary world. In the ordinary world a stranger may spend the night at our neighbour's house while her husband is away - not knowing that they are brother and sister could lead to some silly conclusions! We must be doubly careful with conclusions drawn from energetic sense perceptions until we learn how to properly recognise and evaluate them.

**As well as being resultant of clearing our minds**, increased sensitivity results from inadequate grounding and of being off-centre. Many natural sensitives are in this condition, so they cannot usually distinguish clearly between the energetic senses and their own or others' fantasies. Until we learn to be thoroughly earthed and centred, and to really understand these senses, it is best to not pay too much heed to such perceptions.

**All these experiences are leading towards improved health**, increased mental acuity, greater insight, and a healthier, more balanced emotional state.

## Being Grounded



**As adults we have learned to be concerned with the past and the future**, and to put value on them. We worry about the future and dwell upon how the past has affected us. As children we were able to 'be' in the moment - accepting as a matter of fact - moving from time to time - experiencing unhappiness at times and moving to contentedness when times were good. Meditation helps to clear this fog and grounding exercises deal with this more specifically - helping us to return to the real world.

Becoming off-centre, or ungrounded can happen in various situations including:

**Attachment to objects, work, people** - where we project our own sense of identity and need for security onto

someone or something else, being centred in something else rather than ourselves. We think that externals like money and objects or ideals create happiness.

Control of that which we cannot control - other people's feelings, beliefs, attitudes or certain situations. Trying to protect, control, own or fix something or someone in our environment over which we have no control will take us off-centre.

**Seeking approval** - in the hope of gaining love is another means of control. Our own feelings and desires are suppressed, which is potentially harmful to health.

**Being sensitive to others**, more so than to ourselves can muddle our feelings and make us overly susceptible to the inner turmoil and distress of others.

**Denial of the reality around us**, refusing to acknowledge painful or fortunate events We can often just put up the barriers and say 'You didn't really mean that', it's all a mistake', or 'that can't be true'. And we live in our fantasies instead of the real world.

**Emotional turmoil** - allowing the emotion to happen as though it's the only possible response. Becoming so involved with the anger or fear that we become centred on that emotion rather than ourselves.

**We all have our moments of ungroundedness**, and following is a simple exercise to be practised that can have the effect of eliminating a lot of the problems that currently seem important and take up a lot of energy.

## Exercise in grounding

- **Notice what you are feeling at this moment.** How do you feel physically? Emotionally? Mentally? Don't try to change anything, but simply notice any tensions or other feelings that may be present.
- **Next, to see how you are breathing** at this moment, place one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen. Notice where your breath flows. Which hand moves most when you breath? Does either hand move at all?
- **Allow yourself to begin breathing so the hand on your chest** (and the chest itself), holds almost still and the one on the abdomen feels most of the movement of the breath. Take at least ten breaths this way. Breathe slowly enough so you don't hyperventilate or become dizzy.
- **After you have done this, continue the same breathing pattern** and begin to imagine any unpleasant energy within you, (fatigue, tension, nervousness, distraction etc.), flowing down through your body and legs, through your feet and into the earth. Imagine it flowing down as you exhale each breath. Keep being aware of your breath in your abdomen as you do this.
- **After several minutes of this**, go back to just concentrating on your breath and on the movements of your hands, allowing your abdomen to move, but keeping the chest relatively still. Do this for another fifteen breaths.
- **When you are finished** check once more and see what feelings you are now experiencing.

## Note your experiences

What did you feel before doing the breathing? After? Do you notice anything now that you didn't notice before - are you any more self-aware? Has anything changed in the way your body or emotions feel?

This exercise helps us to learn to be more aware of just how earthed or unearthed we are at any time. So we can form the habit of checking our own sense of ourselves for centredness and connectedness, especially when under any kind of stress.