

PRACTICAL ASPECT OF MEDITATION

By

Sri Swami Sivananda

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This world is full of miseries and sufferings. If you want to get rid of the pains and afflictions of this Samsara, you must practise meditation. Meditation leads to the knowledge of the Self, which brings about Eternal Peace and Supreme Bliss. Meditation prepares you for the integral experience or direct intuitive knowledge. Meditation is the flow of continuous thought of one thing or God or Atman. Meditation is the pathway to divinity. It is the royal road to the kingdom of Brahman. It is a mysterious ladder which reaches from earth to Heaven (Vaikuntha-Kailasa-Brahman), from error to Truth, from darkness to Light, from pain to Bliss, from restlessness to abiding Peace, from ignorance to Knowledge, from mortality to Immortality.

Truth is Brahman. Truth is Atman. You cannot realise the Truth without reflection and meditation. The mode of meditation differs according to the path adopted by the aspirant. A Bhakta practises Saguna Dhyana on the form of his Ishta Devata. A Hatha Yogi meditates on the Chakras and the presiding deities. A Jnana Yogi meditates on his own Self. He practises Ahamgraha Upasana. A Raja Yogi meditates on the special Purusha who is not affected by afflictions and desires.

The mind assumes the form of the object it cognises. Then only perception is possible. A Bhakta constantly meditates on the form of his tutelary deity or Ishta Devata. The mind always takes the form of the deity. When he is established in his meditation, when he attains the stage of Para Bhakti or supreme devotion, he sees his Ishta Devata only everywhere. The names and forms vanish. A devotee of Lord Krishna sees Lord Krishna only everywhere and experiences the state described in the Gita "*Vasudevah Sarvam iti*—Everything is Vasudeva only." A Jnani or a Vedanti sees his own Self or Atman everywhere. The world of names and forms vanishes from his view. He experiences the utterances of the seers of the Upanishads: "*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*—All indeed is Brahman."

You must have a pure mind if you want to realise the Self. Unless the mind is set free and casts away all desires, cravings, worries, delusion, pride, lust, attachment, likes and dislikes, it cannot enter into the domain of Supreme Peace and unalloyed felicity—the Immortal Abode. A glutton or a sensualist, a dullard or a lazy man, cannot practise meditation. He who has controlled the tongue and other organs, who has an acute acumen, who eats, drinks and sleeps in moderation, who has destroyed selfishness, lust, greed and anger, can practise meditation and attain success in Samadhi.

You cannot enjoy peace of mind and cannot practise meditation if there is Vikshepa in your mind. Vikshepa is tossing of mind. Vikshepa is Rajas. Vikshepa and desires co-exist in the mind. If you really want to destroy Vikshepa, you must destroy all mundane desires and cravings through dispassion and self-surrender to the Lord.

If you apply fire to a green wood, it will not burn; if you apply fire to a piece of dried wood, it will at once catch fire and burn. Even so, those who have not purified their minds, will not be able to start the fire of meditation. They will be sleeping or dreaming—building castles in the air—when they sit for meditation. But those who have removed the impurities in their minds by Japa, service, charity, Pranayama, etc., will enter into deep meditation as soon as they sit for meditation. The pure, ripe mind will at once burn with the fire of meditation.

Mind is compared to a garden. Just as you can cultivate good flowers and fruits in a garden by ploughing and manuring the land, by removing the weeds and thorns and by watering the plants and trees, so also you can cultivate the flower of devotion in the garden of your mind by removing the impurities of the mind, such as lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, etc., and watering it with divine thoughts. Weeds and thorns grow in the rainy season, disappear in summer, but their seeds remain underneath the ground. As soon as there is a shower, the seeds again germinate and sprout out. Even so, the Vrittis (modifications of the mind) manifest on the surface of the conscious mind, then disappear and assume a subtle seed-state, the form of Samskaras or impressions. The Samskaras again become Vrittis either through internal or external stimulus. When the garden is clean, when there are no weeds and thorns you can get good fruits. So also, when the mind is pure, when the mind is free from lust, anger, etc., you can have the fruit of good, deep meditation. Therefore cleanse the mind of its impurities first. Then the current of meditation will flow by itself.

If you want to keep a garden always clean, you will have to remove not only the weeds and thorns and other small plants but also the seeds that lie underneath the ground which again germinate during rainy season. Even so, you will have to destroy not only the big waves or Vrittis of the mind but also the Samskaras which are the seeds for births and deaths, which generate Vrittis again and again, if you want to enter into Samadhi and attain liberation or perfect freedom.

Without the help of meditation, you cannot attain knowledge of the Self. Without its aid, you cannot grow into the divine state. Without it, you cannot liberate yourself from the trammels of the mind and attain Immortality. If you do not practise meditation, the supreme splendour and fadeless glories of Atman will remain hidden from you. Tear the veils that cover the soul by practising regular meditation. Rend asunder the five sheaths that screen the Atman by constant meditation and then attain the final beatitude of life.