

# SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

## IV

By

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## SYLLABUS

### Week Topic

1. Overview of Active Meditation and contacting your Higher Self.  
**Read pages 1 - 25** of the handout and  
**Read Area 1 (pp. 43 - 46)** prior to class.  
Create a new habit or pattern you want to develop:  
(See Symbolism page 19)
  - a) Write it out on paper, then
  - b) Condense it to one sentence, and then
  - c) Condense it to one Word.
  - d) You are to energize that Word everyday in meditation.
  
2. Creating an enlightened self-image, which will help us establish a correct awareness of identity.  
**Reading pages 26 - 42** of the handout and  
**Read Area 2 (pp. 47 – 53)** prior to class and,  
Make a list of the following:
  1. The roles you have in life.
  2. The achievements, recent or remote, you have made.
  3. Create a Mental Symbol that represents your Self-Image.
  
3. Defining intelligent goals and values, which will give us a proper focus for our self-expression.  
**Read Area 3 (pp. 54 - 61)** prior to class and,  
Make a list of the following:
  1. The goals of your Higher Self.
  2. The spiritual values and ideals you have, or desire.
  
4. Cleaning the mental household, which will enable the personality to become a more effective partner of the Higher Self.  
**Read Area 4 (pp. 62 - 70)** prior to class and,  
Make a list of the following:
  1. List the strengths and weaknesses of your character, feelings, and habits.
  
5. Healing the emotions, which will enable the personality to become a more effective partner of the Higher Self.  
**Read Area 5 (pp. 71 - 90)** prior to class and,  
Compile a list of your emotional hurts.

6. Invoking the wisdom of the Higher Self, which will bring us guidance and enrich our understanding of life.  
**Read Area 6 (pp. 91 - 100)** prior to class and,  
Make a list of what areas you want wisdom.
7. Applying the wisdom of the Higher Self to solve problems, enabling us to become more effective in our self-expression.  
**Read Area 7 (pp. 101 - 111)** prior to class and,  
Make a list of problems to be solved.
8. Exploring the themes of creative self-discovery, leading to a more enlightened role in life.  
**Read Area 8 (pp. 112 - 121)** prior to class and,  
Make a list of select areas of creative potential.  
**Also Read pages 122 - 126**

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## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IV

This class is focused on the development and transformation of our personality into the essence of our Higher Self and, eventually, Spirit. The tool that will be used is Active Meditation.

After we experience a growth process, we sometimes find a book that describes what we experienced. This happened to me when I read the book **Active Meditation** by Robert Leichtman, M.D. & Carl Japikse, Columbus, OH: Ariel Press, 1982. In my spiritual development, I intuitively discovered and used many of the techniques described by Dr. Leichtman and Japikse in their book. This class incorporates the main theme of the book along with my insights.

There are numerous techniques for meditation, so each person is to decide what methods work best for them. For convenience, when the word "meditation" is used in this manuscript, it is referring to the **Practice of Active Meditation only**. Other meditative practices will vary greatly in their approach and in the techniques used to achieve their goal.

The term "God", or "Spirit", is used to represent the highest level of spiritual consciousness, and no religious significance is inferred. I consider the following words interchangeable: Higher Self and Soul, God and Spirit. My definition of meditation is any technique creating a sense of Oneness between the individual and a higher source, sometimes called God.

Some people are not ready to be in Oneness with God, so the next best step would be in oneness with their Higher Self. All references hereafter in this manuscript will refer to connecting to your Higher Self, however, keep in mind that you can go the next step -- connecting to Spirit or God. Some people will travel through several aspects of their multidimensional self, connecting with their angelic self, their cosmic self, until they have no further need for separation from their God-Self.

### THE ROLE OF MEDITATION

Meditation is an act of cooperation, and an active communication between the personality and the Higher Self. It is a technique for strengthening the bond between the personality and the Higher Self. Talking with the Higher Self is just like talking with an angel. It should be an intelligent communication and relationship with the angelic nature of your human spirit.

Meditation provides access to a higher realm of intelligence, benevolence, guidance, creativity and pure love. It is a communion with the deepest most powerful, most wise and loving part within us -- our Higher Self, or Soul. Once we have made contact, we can expect the exchange of ideas to be lively, active and enriching. The Higher Self is the essence of our humanity and it is, the source of our inspiring wisdom, our healing love, and our basic will to live. It will help us cleanse the personality as well as enhance our daily self-expression.

The goal of meditation is enrichment of consciousness. The skills of meditation are designed to enhance the enrichment of self-expression. Its focus is to bring heaven to earth, not to escape to heaven and stay there. Disconnecting from the non-productive thoughts in our subconscious does nothing to transmute them.

The whole of the personality -- conscious, subconscious, and unconscious -- must be involved in our dialogue with the Higher Self if our meditations are to be effective. A sensible way to link the personality with the Higher Self is through the practice of integration. Integration is the work of making our human nature more compatible to express the power, love, and wisdom of our spiritual nature. The personality and physical body are the vehicles the Higher Self must use to express itself.

**The meditation being presented here is a dynamic process with three distinct stages:**

1. Contacting your Higher Self
2. Transferring some quality, energy or idea from your Higher Self
3. Using this information to transform the life of your personality

**The goals of meditation are:**

1. Growth of character and creativity
2. Obtain new revelations
3. Obtain the power to think
4. Tap the power of love
5. Contact the power to act
6. Transmute the subconscious mind

The best measure of meditation is one's success in managing one's thoughts, feelings, and intentions so they become more enlightened. The activity of meditation is the life of the Higher Self moving through us, awakening us, increasing one's talents and understanding, enriching one's life, and prodding us to transcend our pettiness. If we are using meditation effectively, then eventually everything we think and do and say will reveal the wisdom, love, and power of our spirit. Accomplishments require action. Enlightenment requires action.

The essence of our wisdom, love, and strength is abstract and formless, as are the virtues of the Higher Self. You will deal with images and forms, but the principal focus is to connect us with the abstract levels of the Higher Self.

How is meditation different from prayer? Prayer invokes aspects of our higher life for assistance in our daily activities. Prayer is largely controlled by personality. Meditation lifts aspects of the personality to the level of our Higher Self. Meditation involves extensive change in our state of mind and emotion. Prayer is a one-way communication with a higher power and intelligence; meditation, is a communion with that power.

Meditation is a means of building a superstructure in consciousness, so that we have better access to the life of spirit as well as a means for bringing the riches we discover into active expression in our needs and work.

## **BARRIERS TO MEDITATION**

The following attitudes that can interfere with contacting our Higher Self.

**Those Who Have A Poor Self-Image.** Feeling inferior or unworthy must be changed. We may lack confidence in our ego self, but not in our Higher Self.

**Those Who Have A Victim Complex or Depression.** Believing you are a victim of life or living in hell makes it difficult for the Higher Self to penetrate the gloom and pessimism in your mind.

**Those Who Live In Guilt.** If you are excessively intimidated, or you believe that God is everything and you are nothing, communion with your Higher Self can be hindered. You are spiritual in nature and have the means to heal and enrich that which is imperfect.

**Paranoids.** Defensiveness and hostility prevents a proper relationship with everything, including the Higher Self.

**Dabblers.** Meditation requires self-discipline and perseverance. Going from one system to another will not create the outcome you want.

**Concrete Thinkers.** Some of the most important things in life are nebulous and intangible. So it is with the Higher Self and its influence on us. You cannot touch it, taste it or see it, nevertheless it exists.



**Laziness.** Nice ideas and techniques are not automatic. Meditation is work. It involves change, not escape; self-appraisal, not self-indulgence. Learning and using constructive and efficient techniques for self-help is required.

**The Skeptic.** Doubt is not a hindrance to meditation, unless it is excessive. The skeptic person may miss important events and phenomena.

**The Gullible.** Discernment is a basic tool for the meditator. The gullible person needs to add common sense to his or her openness and trust.

Attitudes which need to be left behind for effective communion with your Higher Self: Skepticism, vanity, prejudices and stubbornness generally keep out the light of our Higher Self. Gloominess, self-pity, depression, and criticism usually limit the compassion, joy, and serenity of the Higher Self.

## **ENTERING THE MEDITATIVE STATE**

Contact with our Higher Self is something we basically work out on our own. Since we are individuals, the nature of the contact will vary from one person to the next.

The bridge between the personality and the Higher Self is meditation. The personality is accustomed to acting, feeling, and thinking in concrete ways; the Higher Self is abstract and free of mundane limitations. Effective contact means to transcend the limits of ordinary awareness and begin to operate at the Higher Self level of the consciousness.

The key to making contact with the essence of the Higher Self is learning to identify with it -- to identify with its attributes. This identification goes beyond just an intellectual acceptance of the fact of the Higher Self. It requires us to raise the level of our awareness. We must identify primarily with our spiritual nature. We are, in fact, the Higher Self. The personality and physical body are extensions of our consciousness that we use for creative and useful work in the world.

As the personality begins to receive information about the Higher Self, it may have difficulty making sense of it. The Higher Self resides in a world of universal themes and abstract forces; the personality lives in a world of finite events, concrete themes, and small concerns. The Higher Self lives in a realm of ideals and perfection; the personality lives in an imperfect world, frequently hassled and frustrated by human error and pettiness.

The Higher Self dwells in full awareness that it is a divine immortal being endowed with tremendous resources of power, wisdom, talents, strength, and dignity; the personality is constantly reminded of its mortality, weakness, and limitations.

When you first begin to identify with the lofty Higher Self, the subconscious will repeatedly throw up objections and barriers of doubt and disbelief. The personality often reacts as if it were an orphan who managed to grow up on its own, only to discover he was the lost son of an extremely wealthy parent who now offers help to the orphan. "Where were you when I needed you," is a common reaction.

Your Higher Self never loses or abandons the personality. Rather, we lose our awareness of the Higher Self and how to contact it. We lose it by identification with the experiences of life and the sensations of the body and emotions.

Making contact with the Higher Self demands taking responsibility for learning the process and, through practice, mastering it. The resources are inherent in every human being. They are accessible to every intelligent person. But they remain latent until we begin to identify with them. The Higher Self understands and loves us. It supports and helps us as we seek to identify with it. But we must initiate the effort.

In meditation, we are entertaining the saintly and angelic nature of our Higher Self, and we are to treat this guest with the same respect and graciousness we extend to a good friend. Be the good host, listen intently, and try to understand what the Higher Self has to say. As impulses of the higher essence emerges in our awareness, we are expected to relate them to the needs of our life, focus them in meaningful self-improvement, pursue a fuller comprehension of the fragments received, and ask questions where further clarification is required. The mind and emotions are to be subdued so they do not rebel, but they must not be turned off, as they are the vehicles needed to receive and contain what is coming to us from this transcendent source.

**The ideal state for receptivity of the Higher Self includes:**

The body is relaxed and quite so we can collect our thoughts without being distracted.

The emotions are focused on tranquility and quiet devotion to the life of the Higher Self.

The mind is reflecting on the nature and wisdom of the Higher Self, and what this means in terms of daily activities.

The personal will is focused on a sense of purpose, a willingness to change, and a commitment to the plan and direction of the Higher Self.

## **ENTERING A MEDITATION**

In all, there are Four Stages: Relaxation, Concentration, Detachment, and Attunement. None of these stages alone constitute meditative contact with the Higher Self. They are to be used in sequence, leading to a full and active state of alertness and readiness. Always keep in mind the purpose of meditation is to lift our conscious attention to our Higher Self, to be nourished by its qualities and become a better agent for expressing its purpose.

### **Relaxation**

The first step in contacting the essence of the Higher Self is relaxation, a process of releasing tension in the body, emotions and mind. It is making the body comfortable so that we can forget it. When properly poised, the body will seldom distract us. As a result, we can focus the mind on the work to be done. If serious problems are encountered in becoming relaxed, then some healing of major conflicts, fears, and irritations must be pursued.

### **Concentration**

While releasing tension, we can begin the process of concentration. The purpose of concentration is to keep our attention focused on the ideas we are considering, or on the work we are pursuing. Concentration only necessitates creating a level of interest which will easily hold our attention. An effective meditation should never be boring or dull. It is an opportunity to respond to the most intelligent and inspiring levels of our consciousness. The Higher Self does not think about one detail or one thought at a time, it encompasses a whole universe of inspiration.

Concentrate on the theme of what we are doing, more than on the details. Each theme, such as contacting the Higher Self, or improving some aspect of the emotions, will encompass a multitude of details and observations. We may have many details or ideas in focus at any one time, yet we hold our concentration by continuing to be primarily interested in the work or theme at hand. Our basic interest in what we are doing holds our attention so that we can make sense of the complete activity.

### **Detachment**

Relaxation and concentration are purely preliminary steps; actual identification with the Higher Self begins with detachment. Detachment is the realignment of our attention from the outer worlds of sensation and experience, to the more subtle realms of our inner life.

Detachment expands our perspective on life to include more than the mundane alone.

The following are some pitfalls in detaching from the personality without identification with the Higher Self.

1. It can lead to a state of dissociation from the personality. To learn about the active nature of the Higher Self we have to maintain our involvement in life.
2. It can lead to denying the value of the personality. The personality is the child of the Higher Self, and needs to be honored and respected as such.
3. It can create an attitude of escapism, which actually has the effect of emphasizing our problems. We become obsessed with our problems and escaping from them.

None of these will cause any real difficulty if we keep focused on the realization that we have a body, emotions, a mind, and many memories, and they are basically good. But we are more than these things; we are the Higher Self. We are able to identify with the Higher Self and assert dominion over the personality.

**There is never any denial of our thoughts, feelings, or intentions - - positive or negative -- with detachment.** Detachment is a careful and reasoned reflection on the fact that we have an extra dimension of wisdom, compassion and strength, which transcends our personality, its experiences, and its reactions. We have the opportunity to use these qualities to discipline, heal, and enrich our personality and its self-expression.

Detachment is more than a meditative process, for it becomes an approach to living. Meditation is a way for practicing and perfecting it.

I have a physical body, but I am more than my physical body. The body is important to me, because it allows me to act in the physical world. The physical body is home for my Higher Self and spirit. My Higher Self is greater than the conditions of the physical body. It is the source of vitality within me.

I have emotions, but I am more than my feelings and emotions. The emotions are important to me, for they help me to express love and interact with others. The emotions are energy which can be used by the Higher Self. My Higher Self is greater than the state of my emotions. It is the source of love and benevolence within me.

I have a mind, but I am more than my thoughts and memories. The mind is important, as it enables me to make sense of life, and to express my talents and wisdom. The mind communicates and executes the plan of the Higher Self. It is the source of wisdom within me.

I have a personal will, but I am more than this will. Will is important, for it gives me motivation and intention. My Higher Self is stronger than my personal will. It is the source of divine intention within me, and the true source of personal authority.

Who am I? I am not my body, nor my emotions, mind, personal will, or my experiences, although I do have these things. I AM the Higher Self, a center of Pure Love, Wisdom and Power. This is my True Identity.

Remember the sequence of these ideas, and think about them, one at a time. In the beginning, entire meditations can be directed to contemplating and understanding these important ideas. Later, this idea can be thought through quite quickly.

### **Attunement**

The steps of relaxation, concentration, and detachment are to release the bulk of the disharmony in our personality before we make this contact with the Higher Self. Having identified with the Higher Self through detachment, the next step is entering the meditative state. This is done by fixing our attention on the power and benevolence of the Higher Self. This Step is called Attunement.

Attunement is the process of connecting our personal strength and power to the power of the Higher Self, our emotions and mind to the love and wisdom of the Higher Self. We magnetize our ego self to the strength of the Higher Self by loving its power and authority. We develop trust in its capacity to guide and support us. We magnetize our ego self to the kindness of the Higher Self by loving its benevolence and affection. We rejoice in its capacity to provide for us and to teach us. We magnetize our ego self to the wisdom of the Higher Self by loving its intelligence and knowledge. We observe the vast resources of understanding it has, as well as the capacity of our own talents, skills, and comprehension to grow in its presence.

It is the responsibility of the personality to want this connection with the Higher Self. The **Higher Self cannot intrude** into our awareness until we place our conscious thoughts, feelings, and intentions in harmony with it.

The subconscious mind of the average person most often is focused in the material plane and the earthly concerns of the personality. Through the use of symbolism, a bridge can be created between the abstract forces and powers of the Higher Self and the personality.

One such symbol is to think of our ego self being bathed in a light which comes from the Higher Self and incorporates the Higher Self's love, wisdom, and power.

It can also be useful to conceive our true identity as being a perfect idea in the mind of the Creator. We are to manifest this divine blueprint in our body and personality.

We can regard the Higher Self as our best friend and teacher, who dearly understands, supports, and loves us. From this dear friend, we can apply the qualities of the Higher Self to which we most need to attune.

The Power of Attunement is the Essence of Love -- not pictures or concepts. Symbols help create a theme for the subconscious mind to relate to, but their effectiveness is through the **concentration on the love** which is associated with the picture. If we focus on the symbols too concretely, we can miss the real value of this contact.

### **A TECHNIQUE FOR CONTACTING THE HIGHER SELF**

1. Focus on our purpose in meditation -- to contact the essence of our Higher Self in order to be strengthened by its power, wisdom, and love.
2. Next, we need to relax the body and the personality to be comfortable and released from tension.
3. Concentrate our attention on the goals and themes we want to cultivate.
4. We identify with the Higher Self by the process of detachment, knowing that we are more than the aspects of the personality and body. We are the essence of the Higher Self.
5. Now we attune to the love, wisdom, and power of the Higher Self by loving its qualities and being thankful for its intimate involvement in our life. We sense the deep love and acceptance embracing us and moving through us.

## Have I Made Contact?

The best evidence is the growing knowingness that we are indeed loved and understood by an intelligence, which has always been with us. Meditation, being a transcendental experience, has its initial effect on our unconscious and deep subconscious mind. It may take time to work through the many layers of personality to emerge into conscious awareness. With patience and continued meditation, important changes will occur in our outlook on life and how we relate to life.

The sensations of personality can occur without any contact with the Higher Self. It's best not to put much relevance in them to validate contact with the Higher Self. Some of these sensational are:

- Being deeply relaxed
- Seeing white light -- or any color of light
- Changes in body temperature
- Changes in consciousness
- A sense of peace or bliss

## The Greater And The Lesser

We must be willing to confront the problems and responsibilities of our own life. We must be willing to develop new skills as needed, and to use the resources of the Higher Self. Just contacting the Higher Self has little effect on the personality. The personality must integrate the aspects of the Higher Self into the fabric of our personality for enlightened change and oneness.

Since meditation is designed to promote integration, it is essential that meditators realize they are both teachers and students on the path to oneness. In fact, we are more than a teacher and student, we are the healer and patient, and the parent and child as well.

Spiritual integration can be summed up in the maxim: ***the greater takes care of the lesser***. The teacher takes care of the student. The healer takes care of the patient. The parent takes care of the child. In activating this principle, we set the stage for integration of the personality. Only the greater power, love, and wisdom of the Higher Self can provide fully the guidance, strength, and love the personality needs in order to complete its earthly tasks with dignity and nobility.

Each person has mature and immature elements within her or his character. The person who takes time in meditation to discover the mature aspects of her or his character will be able to:

- Approach life difficulties as a problem solver
- Discipline emotions and anxieties
- Mobilize courage and other resources
- Maintain a cheerful attitude in the face of difficulty.

It is not sufficient to find the noble and mature elements within our character, we must learn how to use them. The child within us will want gratification, while the adult within wants the child to learn self-sufficiency. The inner student wants ready-made answers and pat solutions, while the inner teacher wants the student to develop inner guidance. The patient within us wants relief of pain, while the healer within wants to cure the underlying issue, not just relieve the symptoms. Therefore, it is not enough to observe the greater and lesser elements within us. The greater must learn to take care of the lesser. Only then can integration become a reality.

### **Maturity**

The mature elements within us must be activated so they encompass the immature elements within us, cleansing and healing them and nurturing their transformation. The nurturing parent within us is an excellent model for the work of integration.

The Higher Self provides joy, hope, peace, wisdom, courage, and compassion in great quantities into the personality, day after day. Most people are not aware of this constant flow of love and support, and therefore do not receive the full benefit of it.

The person who learns to use the wise parent within can take advantage of this spiritual resource. As we activate the divine parent within us, we gradually establish a relationship where:

- The confusion of the personality is cleansed and healed by the knowledge of the Higher Self.
- The concerns of the personality find solutions in the wisdom of the Higher Self.
- The sadness of the personality changes to cheerfulness as it is elevated into the joy of the Higher Self.
- The anger of the personality is melted away by the forgiveness of the Higher Self.
- The fears of the personality are replaced with courage through the strength of the Higher Self.



## **THE SKILLS OF MEDITATION**

The skills of meditation are practical abilities which are intended to be developed by the personality as it seeks to integrate with the Higher Self. The God-Self within us needs a well-trained, competent and active personality to guide the day-to-day work of the outer life. By focusing the activities of meditation, those portions of the personality living in pain or fear can be lifted up into the love and compassion of the Higher Self, cleansed, renewed, and given new definition. Lets get acquainted with these skills.

### **Taking Charge**

The personality is meant to assume responsibility for its behavior and activities, and initiate meditative contact. Meditation is intended to be a very active time, with the meditator choosing themes to focus on, asking questions, pursuing hints and suggestions, attuning to selected qualities or forces of the Higher Self, directing them where they are needed, and so forth. This can only happen if the person is able to take charge.

The personality is designed to be aware of what is happening in life and understanding it, evaluating what is helpful and what may be harmful. It is expected to explore opportunities to learn and grow, searching for untapped resources within, taking risks, experimenting with new ideas, and creating new ways of successful living.

In meditation, the meditator is expected to be the director of the action which unfolds. In this way, he or she begins to be in closer harmony with the Higher Self, the real director of all the action in our life.

### **A Multidimensional Being In A Multidimensional Universe**

The unawakened personality generally responds to life circumstances from one dimension, which most often consists of an emotional response. We are more than flesh and body. We are in a number of dimensions, and not all of them are visible. There is the dimension of our emotions, the mind, and the Higher Self. In meditation, we must work multidimensionally, being aware of the Higher Self, our thoughts, our feelings, and how we express these elements in physical activities simultaneously.

Let's say a person is being dishonest with us. Working from a multidimensional consciousness, we are able to sense the many levels of this event simultaneously:

- The words and deeds which occurred physically.
- The emotional reactions of both of us.
- The other person's motivation for behaving in this way.
- The outcomes of the many different ways we might respond to this dishonesty.
- The values, dignity, compassion, and purpose in living our divine essence and how it wants to respond to the situation.

A person's one dimensional response is likely to be anger or hurt. From a multidimensional perspective, we can respond with tolerance, compassion and wisdom, even while being firm and not allowing the person to be dishonest. We let the person know that his or her behavior is unacceptable.

If we are able to work multidimensionally, we can respond to life's situations from the qualities of our Higher Self rather than the personality. Operating from our multidimensional nature, we know that our thoughts and attitudes do not have to be determined by physical events. They can be directed from higher levels in a way that honors and respects the essence of the Higher Self.

### **Divine Archetypes**

Divine archetypes are patterns of perfection which God, or the Source, created to assist in bringing heaven into manifestation on earth. Examples of such archetypes would be the power and pattern to be cheerful, to lead, to organize, to be loving, and to be courageous. These patterns are the design and living force from which all of life has been created -- humanity, nature, and the universe.

A mother, for example, could invoke the perfect pattern of dignity and courage in helping her child overcome strong fears. By repeatedly invoking this perfect pattern, she would become familiar with its nature, its power, and how to fully express it.

### **Spiritual Ideals**

Spiritual ideals are aspects of our Higher Self which serve as blueprints for our individual self-expression. An ideal way to think, feel, and act in any circumstance of daily life, past, present, or future.

To use the spiritual ideal, you first need to recognize a genuine need in your personality. Then we invoke the spiritual ideal of the Higher Self that we lack. If we are angry with a person, it would be the ideal of forgiveness. If we are irritated by delays, it would be the ideal of patience. By focusing our attention to the ideal, we can then consider how its force and perfection can be expressed, mentally, emotionally, and physically. This technique infuses the elements of the greater into the lesser.

## **Symbolism**

A symbol is a visual image, memory, feeling, thought, event, or phrase which represents something in addition to its literal meaning. While a symbol can be useful in meditation, it is necessary to look beyond its appearance.

Symbols may lead us back to the Higher Self, or to archetypal forces and spiritual ideals. But these symbols can also represent forces and issues of the subconscious and unconscious portions of our personality, as well as mass consciousness.

A symbol must be evaluated carefully, whether it arises in a meditation or a dream, because we would want to deal with a symbol of the Higher Self differently than one from the subconscious. A symbol representing a repressed emotion deep in the subconscious would be used to find the repressed emotion, so it could be cleansed and replaced by something healthier. A symbol of a spiritual ideal, for example, could be used repeatedly to help us reestablish contact with the essence of that ideal.

A meditator can create a symbol that represents a new habit pattern that he or she wants to develop. This symbol can then be used in meditation to align the subconscious mind with this new pattern. For example, think of a new pattern that you want to create. Write it out on paper. Now, condense it down to one sentence. Lastly, condense it down to one word which represents this new pattern. This word is what you focus on in meditation, as it contains every aspect of the new pattern in your other-than-conscious mind. Using symbols in this way whether they are pictures, words, thoughts helps us to organize the subconscious better.

## **Seed Thoughts**

A verbalized spiritual ideal becomes a seed thought -- a concise phrase, a brief sentence, or a word which embodies a complex set of insights, motivations, thoughts, and qualities. When in contact with the Higher Self, we put our attention on the seed thought and enrich it with our desire to honor it in our self-expression.

Positive affirmations that are activated in a meditative state and empowered with the qualities and power of the Higher Self infuse the subconscious mind with this force. Ordinary positive thoughts and self-hypnosis do not achieve this because they do not have the power of the Higher Self behind them.

While it is possible to energize a number of seed thoughts in a single meditation, it might be best to use only one seed thought per meditation until expertise is gained.

## **Mental Role-Playing**

To have a spiritual ideal become an active part of our character, we must give it focus and definition. One of the best ways to do this is through mental role-playing. We can imagine our ego self as a wise and nurturing parent to the child within us, explaining the value of acting in new ways and demonstrating what this entails. It is creating a movie in our mind of what we want to become -- using the visual, auditory, and feeling components to create our desired outcome.

Mental role-playing assists us to focus our spiritual force into our subconscious, and in rehearsing the ideal way to act in a variety of circumstances or conditions. In this way, we can have a trial run with our thoughts and feelings in using a new ideal or power of the Higher Self.

## **Blessing**

Blessing is the radiation of love and light of the Higher Self towards an aspect of the personality or its daily life for the purpose of nurturing it. Blessing is an act of spirit, and is one of the most healing activities in which we can engage, when confronted with imperfection, adversity, or difficulty.

It accelerates the development of inherent spiritual potential. Blessing has the effect of neutralizing that which opposes and resists the essence of the Higher Self. Blessing is an active expression of the greater taking care of the lesser.

## **Personification**

The act of imagining the personality to be two people, the wise Higher Self and the child, is an act of personification. This process enables us to more readily accept the concept that there is a mixture of both wise and immature elements in our character.

Divine archetypes can be personified by figures from mythology. Our spiritual ideals can be embodied as "the saint within." Personification in this manner makes it easier to contact and communicate with abstract forces and qualities, by giving them a concrete focus.

## **AREAS OF GROWTH**

Through the use of the basic skills in meditation we can seek to integrate the love, power, and wisdom of the Higher Self into the life of the personality. This transforms the personality and enables it to become an agent of the light and love of God.

In meditation these skills are the tools to create specific techniques which help the personality grow and achieve the goal of enlightenment -- an enlightened consciousness and an enlightened self-expression. This class will focus on seven areas which are:

1. Creating an enlightened self-image, which will help us establish a correct awareness of identity.
2. Defining intelligent goals and values, which will give us a proper focus for our self-expression.
3. Cleaning the mental household, which will enable the personality to become a more effective partner of the Higher Self.
4. Healing the emotions, which will enable the personality to become a more effective partner of the Higher Self.
5. Invoking the wisdom of the Higher Self, which will bring us guidance and enrich our understanding of life.
6. Applying the wisdom of the Higher Self to solve problems, enabling us to become more effective in our self-expression.
7. Exploring the themes of creative self-discovery, leading to a more enlightened role in life.

There are many other ways to use the Higher Self contacts, but these focus on the primary goal of spiritual integration.

## GROUNDING THE LIFE OF THE HIGHER SELF

Each human being is designed to be a single, integrated self. We speak of the parent within and the child within, the personality and the Higher Self -- but the goal of Active Meditation is to integrate these different parts, not increase the distinction between them. We are not to have a meditative self and another self which is busy and active in daily life. The self which meditates must be seen as the same self which is active and busy in life.

The seven techniques of Active Meditation are designed to be used by the individual who is active in daily life and is seeking to integrate the life of the Higher Self into the busy, productive, and fulfilling life of the personality. They are practical in approach and need to be translated into our daily self-expression. This stage is known as the process of **grounding the qualities, skills and principles of the Higher Self** in the life of the personality.

To float up into the clouds becoming impractical and dreamy will accomplish very little in our earth reality. You are already a spirit being in the spirit world who has also chosen to be in the material world at the same time. The practice of meditation is to instill our spiritual nature in daily life, even as we become aware of our heavenly nature.

### Our Spiritual Duty

The earthly existence is like a soap-opera, and it is easy to forget that the melodramas and roles we create are only experiences we choose in order to develop spiritual character. When acting a role, we may forget that we are more than the role. We are spirit incarnate, and, as such, we are to enrich the roles we play and make intelligent statements about life through everything we do. We are meant to express spirit through our Higher Self and by our personality.

True self-expression is knowing who we are when we have removed the masks of the roles we play -- it is knowing our true self. It is expressing the values, principles, and talents of this true self -- the Higher Self -- in everything we do.

This kind of self-expression is what heals and enriches the personality and gives the greater within us a chance to contribute to life. It enables the light within us to shine forth in and thorough everything we do.

True spiritual self-expression is our duty. It is our divine obligation to spiritualize civilization and enrich the physical plane. Only by individuals striving to bring new light and love into their daily life can the spiritualization of civilization be achieved.

## **The Higher Self Commitment**

The value of enlightened self-expression is enormous, both for the personality and for the Higher Self.

In the personality, self-expression stirs up the life force, giving focus to our useful ideas, plans, and intentions and breaking up congested areas of consciousness. As you receive so shall you give. If we receive inspiration, power and compassion from the Higher Self, we need to express (give) wisdom, strength, and goodwill in our acts. If we fail to do so, the personality may gradually become restless, depressed, irritable and frustrated, thereby creating psychological congestion.

Self-expression can only be measured by the degree to which we express our inner nature and qualities. To honor wisdom, we must engage in intelligent activities. To honor love, we must treat others with goodwill, affection, compassion, and tolerance. To honor the purpose of the Higher Self, we must seek to serve the divine plan. As the personality becomes more and more responsive to expressing the purpose and qualities of the Higher Self in daily life, the plans and intentions of the Higher Self are able to be brought to completion on the physical plane.

The Higher Self has a vital interest in the life of the personality. It invests portions of its wisdom, talent, love, power and plans in creating the personality. Only the person who has cultivated an enlightened self-expression is able to fully understand what it means to participate in the life of humanity.

### **A Multidimensional Phenomenon**

Self-expression is a multidimensional phenomena -- a creative phenomena. For a quality or talent of the Higher Self to achieve self-expression, it must first pass through the concrete mind, then through the emotions, and finally be embodied in physical activity.

The grounding of the work we do in meditation, through our enlightened self-expression, is of the utmost importance to the practice of Active Meditation. During meditations, the work of translating the ideals and wisdom of the Higher Self involves removing obstacles which might sabotage this enlightened self-expression, thereby strengthening our intention to act, and generating an ideal psychological atmosphere in which we can honor the insights we have gained. This work should be integrated into our use of each of the seven techniques for spiritual growth.

Using the meditative skill of mental housecleaning will remove obstacles which might sabotage our enlightened self-expression. We should especially be interested in locating and removing elements of self-doubt, ambivalence, fear of criticism or loss, and hesitation. If we were unaware of the exact nature of the obstacle, we can call up the "dissenting voice" in our meditation and give it the opportunity to speak to us. By becoming aware of the subconscious obstacle, we can suggest that it can work with us creating more elegant ways of living.

In addition to removing obstacles, the period of meditation is also ideal for strengthening our intention to act. Once we have decided how we intend to act, we dwell on the purpose of acting this way. By enlisting this "greater purpose" behind our acts, we are able to tap a powerful source of motivation, strengthening our will to act.

The power of this purpose can then be translated into the actual energies of self-expression by meditating on appropriate seed thoughts, such as: "the greater expresses itself through the lesser," "the courage to act," "purpose determines my self-expression," and "the complete fulfillment of purpose."

Meditation is to generate a cheerful and optimistic psychological climate in which to act and mentally rehearse expressing it. In general, every aspect of our self-expression can be strengthened by making it a regular meditative habit to cultivate a warm and quietly enthusiastic respect for our talents and ideas, and our intended work. Self-respect is vital to sustaining any constructive activity, no matter how much we recognize its value. When you first start building self-respect, it is possible to stir up old feelings of inferiority, self-rejection, and self-denial. These can be released and healed by using the mental housecleaning and strengthening our self-image meditation techniques.

Three points should be kept in mind as we work meditatively to generate a cheerful attitude towards our self-expression and a healthy respect for what we do.

1. We are striving to translate the joy and goodwill of the Higher Self into our attitudes and moods. Feeling good alone does not necessarily mean contact with the Higher Self. Most of the time, attitudes and moods are just expressions of the life of our emotions. Grounding the qualities of the Higher Self is, in part, grounded through the emotions -- our attitudes and moods. We are harnessing the emotions to become an effective vehicle of the love and joy of the Higher Self.



2. Some people find it difficult to remain cheerful and optimistic in the face of the problems and imperfections of their lives. By making sure our mind is responding to spiritual ideals, this difficulty can be avoided. Spiritual powers can be invoked and used to heal the imperfect if our moods and attitudes magnify the ideal conditions of spirit -- not the actual conditions of form.
3. We must do more than have lovely plans and lofty ideas. We must fully intend to involve our ego self in bringing them to achievement physically. We must assume ownership of the work or activity before us, and consider our responsibilities to it.

### **Contemplation**

The work of grounding the abstract qualities of the Higher Self in concrete thoughts, feelings, and plans of the personality at the end of a meditation is known as contemplation. Contemplation is a two-stage process, which begins with meditation on a sacred subject or ideal, but concludes with laying out plans and specific intentions for putting that sacred subject or ideal to work in daily life. The activity of grounding includes quietly reflecting on the implications and meaning of the insights we have just gained, relating them to the needs and opportunities of our daily self-expression. There are several questions which can be considered during this period of contemplation:

1. What new and deeper realization have we gained about our spiritual nature and power?
2. How does this new understanding strengthen us in the pursuit of our daily activities?
3. How does this meditative experience alter our view and attitudes concerning our ego self, our work, our past, and our problems?
4. Has this strengthened our intention to take charge of improving the quality of our life and becoming more like our Higher Self?
5. What new expectation do we have about our ego self and our self-expression?

By reviewing questions of this nature in a contemplative mood at the end of meditation, we begin to saturate our subconscious mind with a vivid awareness of our inner life. This, in turn, helps build the expectation subconsciously that the Higher Self is ready and able to help the personality throughout the day, whenever there is a need for assistance. We begin to know that we always have access to the greater life and power of the Higher Self, not just in meditation but at all times throughout the day.

The period of contemplation at the end of a meditation is an excellent occasion to charge the personality with a special blessing for its self-expression. This can be done by dwelling on a mantra such as:

"The life of my spirit pours through me, strengthening my courage to honor my ideals and my duty to serve in all that I do and say," or  
"May love and goodwill be the center of my self-expression."

This simple technique can refresh and reenergize the personality so that it is prepared for the activities ahead. It also expands the channel between the inner and the outer life.

### **Our Daily Activities**

The most important place for grounding the insights and forces discovered in meditation is our ordinary state of consciousness. We need to put our goals and ideals into practice. Nothing will help the work of meditation more than supporting it with small achievements towards our goal everyday.

If we are working in meditation to heal a certain area of emotional expression, we need to strive to express the ideal emotion in our actual dealings with others. It is useless to fill our ego self with love and compassion during meditation and then continue to treat others selfishly, unkindly, and harshly. If we are striving to enrich our self-esteem, we must try to hold an enlightened opinion of our ego self and the work we do throughout each day.

The power of habits, feelings, attitudes, and beliefs does not arise out of nowhere; it is generated by a specific pattern of actual expression. The most effective way of redirecting psychological power is to change the pattern of expression. It is in the subconscious that we create the patterns of self-expression, good or bad. The subconscious is therefore the primary site for the grounding of meditative work in self-expression.

The subconscious is the product of our experience. If our experiences embody and reflect the wisdom, love, and talent of the Higher Self, the subconscious will be healthy and our self-expression will be enlightened. If, by contrast, we allow our experiences to be of random quality, the quality of our subconscious may be quite low, its structure disorganized, and its function chaotic.

As long as we are incarnate, we have a subconscious, and it is an inseparable part of human nature. The truly enlightened person has healed his or her subconscious mind. Certain techniques can be used to bypass the subconscious mind and be connected to spirit, but that is not being enlightened. Enlightenment means all aspects of our mind have been cleansed and brought into harmony and oneness with Spirit.

The work of putting into practice the life of the Higher Self can be supported in a number of other ways as well:

**Recalling The Mood, Perspective, And Strength Of Our Meditative State.** As often as possible during the day, we should pause and recall the detachment and poise we have achieved during our meditation. By bringing this memory back into mind, we refresh our thinking and feeling with some of the actual qualities we have absorbed during meditation. Remembering the compassion, wisdom, and detachment displaces the elements of fear, doubt, or worry that may be cluttering up our consciousness.

We need to remember that detachment is not reserved exclusively for the state of meditation. It can be very helpful in maintaining an enlightened perspective as we go about our daily work in the mist of difficulties and imperfections. The purpose of detachment is to preserve our identification with the Higher Self, and rise above negativity.

**Reviewing Recent Behavior And Accomplishments.** Near the end of each day, we should review the success and struggles of the personality in grounding the values and ideals of the Higher Self in its self-expression. We need to give our ego self credit for the gains we made in our outer world. In addition, this review serves to identify more clearly the behavior patterns and traits which either help or hinder our efforts to implement the plans and intentions of the Higher Self. We are therefore able to make adjustments and revisions in our approach to spiritual self-expression for the next day.

We are designed to grow each day, in both self-awareness and self-expression. Reviewing our actual behavior and attitudes, day by day, is an excellent way to protect our ego self from self-deception. A daily review can also bring in many new insights and understandings. The wisdom of the Higher Self can be activated anytime, it is not restricted to periods of meditation. Any time we seek to comprehend the meaning and pattern of experience, we can tap this great source of insight to some degree.

**Acting In Life As If We Were Enlightened.** An intelligent way to become something is to "act as though you have it." By acting as though you are free of these deficiencies, and able to act with courage, confidence, and goodwill of the Higher Self. By behaving in this way, we put the emphasis on succeeding, not creating obstacles on our path. This is not meant to suggest the fantasy that we are free of all distress. Rather, it is through the use of detachment that helps us realize our ability to act enlightened in our life.

**Acting With The Conviction That Our Efforts Are Supported By The Work We Have Already Done, In Meditation.** One key aspect of Active Meditation is the use of mental rehearsals during meditation to anticipate ideal behavior in daily life. If we conduct these mental rehearsals, then, in fact, we are prepared to act spiritually wise in the actual circumstances of life. Since the changes have already been made at the inner level, we have the confidence that the outer level reality will be accomplished as well.

### **A New Meaning**

When meditation is grounded in our daily self-expression in these ways, a curious phenomenon happens. The levels of awareness and power into which we tap during our meditative periods gradually become the ordinary levels of awareness and power we use in the daily circumstances of life. As this occurs, the levels of awareness and power into which we tap in meditation become progressively more heavenly.

This is the State of Transcendence. We have done something more than just escape the physical plane and discover spirit. We have learned to ground spirit in the physical plane, thereby lifting up that which is of the earth and giving it a new identity, a new meaning, and a new purpose.

The Higher Self frequently gives the personality more than the personality would like to digest. It stimulates the personality to grow, to stretch itself beyond its current limits, even though the personality would rather stay just the way it is.

The techniques presented in this class are meant to be guides, not a rigid formula for enlightenment. A technique is a starting point at which a person begins to explore what works best for him or her. The techniques are like doorways to the Higher Self. Once one way is known, people discover new ways to contact their Higher Self to achieve the outcomes they want.

### **THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

The purpose of Active Meditation is to live life with a maximum of wisdom, love, dignity, beauty, courage, and skill. If we are able to keep this principle in mind, then the true purpose of meditation will always be self-evident.

For genuine growth to occur, our commitment must be more than just a lovely philosophy. It must be an active feature of our self-expression, embracing all areas of consciousness:

- Our sense of purpose should become more refined.

- Our command of spiritual will should deepen.
- Our range of expanded awareness includes a wider range of ideas, and the capacity to understand and apply them.
- The maturity of our mind and its ability to regulate our behavior should increase.
- Our expression of affection, devotion, compassion, goodwill, and tolerance should be enriched.
- Our skills in managing the problems and challenges of life should improve.
- The productivity of our physical efforts should increase.
- Our capacity to make a contribution to civilization should become greater.

Genuine growth in consciousness and character occurs when we make a significant change in any aspect of our thoughts or attitudes, because it evokes growth in every other aspect of our personality and character as well. A richer experience of the pure love of the Higher Self will eventually change every aspect of our self-expression -- our attitudes about our ego self, our past, our work, our relationships, and the future. This, in turn, will provoke changes in our values, our self-esteem, and perhaps some of our goals.

Ultimately, we must come to grips with the basic reality of growth -- that the conflict of opposing attitudes, habits, and psychological forces must be resolved before major enhancements of new life can enter. Values and assumptions of the past must be examined, reevaluated, and healed. **The failure to acknowledge inconsistencies in our character and work to resolve them is probably the greatest stumbling block to growth.**

For genuine growth to occur, we must work to integrate the whole of our character with the Higher Self, not just the most obvious parts of it. Growth is a cyclical process which repeats itself over and over again. Sometimes it is seen as a spiral pattern perceiving new insights from higher levels of consciousness. There are five phases to this cycle of growth:

1. The invocation of new life from the Higher Self.
2. The registration and comprehension of this new life.
3. The revision of self-image, attitudes, and values, incorporating this new life and our expanded comprehension.
4. A consolidation of the progress we have made, leading to an awareness of the implications inherent in this facet of growth.
5. A return to phase one and a repetition of the entire cycle, perhaps from a higher plane of wisdom.

To fully understand this cycle, we must realize that phase one always follows after the completion of an earlier cycle. **As spiritual beings, we have an impulse to grow already active within us.** If we are seeking genuine solutions and improvements in our daily life, then there will be a genuine inflow of whatever spiritual qualities we need.

The second phase of the cycle is the activity of conscious attunement to this new life. We have to become aware of new insights for them to help us. We have to feel and radiate compassion and tolerance to heal our resentments or bitterness. We need to sense new courage and confidence in order to act with greater initiative in daily life.

Phase three of the cycle takes the new insights and understanding that have been received by the answering of questions and seeks, deliberately and consciously, to integrate them into our memories and associations -- into the structure of our character.

The fourth phase of the cycle of growth consolidates the progress we have made during the earlier stages of the cycle. This consolidation consists partly of recognizing that certain goals of growth have largely been reached and can now be left behind, and partly of understanding the larger dimensions and implications within which this growth has been occurring. Consolidation is the mysterious stage in growth where old trends and chapters come to close, but reappear in a new set of challenges. This is an excellent time to refocus our commitment and dedication to growth, and to realize that growth occurs not only in consciousness but also in achievement.

Once the phase of consolidation is complete, the fifth phase of the cycle is activated -- which takes one back to phase one, and then the cycle begins again. Each new repetition of the cycle brings fresh wisdom, renewed vigor, greater passion, and a higher level of achievement. The personality can only grow effectively if it registers and learns to express the new life it has acquired, before starting a new cycle and the greater stimulation it will bring.

Because growth in consciousness is a dynamic process, changing as our rapport with the Higher Self changes, we can expect our use of meditation to be a changing process as well. There is no set formula for how to use the techniques of Active Meditation, and we steadfastly resist the temptation to establish one. Each person must decide for himself or herself the areas of growth needing the greatest attention, support and concentration, always remaining flexible so that his or her priorities can be adapted or realigned as growth occurs and as new opportunities to grow develop. Indeed, the techniques themselves can be adapted and modified as circumstances require.

## **AIDS TO MEDITATION**

The act of meditation occurs as the personality contacts the Higher Self and then translates the spiritual qualities and forces of the Higher Self into practical expression in daily life. The aids which might help to enrich the meditative experience can be important, but they are far from central.

There are four basic categories of aids to meditate: choosing the proper time to meditate, preparing the surroundings in which we meditate, preparing the body for meditation, and preparing the consciousness for meditation.

### **The Proper Time**

Meditation is designed to complement a full and busy involvement in daily life. When and how often to meditate is primarily a matter of personal choice and convenience. Some choose to meditate twenty to thirty minutes in the morning prior to the day's activities, and again in the evening. Each person needs to work out his or her schedule.

The advantage of having a regular routine is that the subconscious begins to expect and look forward to meditating at the specific time. By becoming a part of our daily life meditation gradually helps the subconscious become more and more receptive to the Higher Self.

### **The Place Of Meditation**

We should be able to meditate anywhere, not only in theory but in actuality. The presence of Spirit is everywhere, not just in a specially designated meditation room. The Higher Self and Spirit should not be limited by any condition of the physical plane. Nevertheless, it is certainly true that some places are more conducive to effective meditation than others.

Some people find an advantage in meditating in nature, away from man-made structures. The forces of nature can create a favorable presence which fosters human health, both physically and psychologically.

There are some locations on the planet that are highly charged with magnetic energy. The meditative value of these magnetic sites are they recharge the vitality of the etheric body and enhance the condition of the emotional body. They assist contact with the higher forces.

A meditation room can be a powerful advantage in creating a spiritual environment. The greatest factors which affects the atmosphere of the place in which we meditate are the thoughts and feelings of the people

who use this place on a regular basis. It is important to have this place cleansed and purified of negative qualities. A good way to prepare a room for meditation is to bless it and consecrate the activities which are about to transpire with divine light and love.

Candles and incense can also be used to dispel adverse forces and flood a room with the qualities that are harmonious to effective meditation. Flowers attract favorable qualities from the subtle planes just as incense does. Inspired music can be used either before or during meditation, to generate a soothing and uplifting effect upon consciousness.

A picture or statue of a holy person can enhance the psychological rapport between the meditator and the qualities he or she admires in the consciousness of the holy person.

### **Preparing The Body**

The best way to prepare the body for a meditation is to make it comfortable and forget it. If we can think while walking, sitting, lying down, or curled up on a lounge, it is possible to meditate in these positions. The entire practice of preparing the physical body for Active Meditation can therefore be reduced to the simple procedures of making it comfortable and relaxing it, withdrawing our attention from it, and focusing our concentration inward.

**The Direction To Face.** The best direction to face while meditating is inward, towards our highest self. The direction the physical body is facing is virtually irrelevant as all the work completed in meditation is done in the higher planes where direction has a different meaning than on the physical plane.

**Posture.** Any posture which assist alertness, comfort, and convenience will suffice. Lying down can be a comfortable position, but many people associate lying down with falling asleep. It therefore may not be the best position for meditation.

### **Preparing Your Consciousness For Meditation**

An effective aid for preparing your consciousness for meditation will serve a number of purposes. It will:

1. Take our attention off our mundane concerns and issues.
2. Mobilize our alertness and responsiveness to the Higher Self.
3. Prepare our immediate psychospiritual environment -- the subtle or psychic equivalent of preparing the room where we meditate.
4. Put us on the wavelength of spiritual qualities.
5. Help us invoke the qualities and life of the Higher Self.



If a practice can help us achieve any of these five goals or a combination of them, it is useful and should be used. These include:

1. Affirmations, prayers, and invocations.
2. Breathing exercises.
3. Mantras.
4. The use of color.
5. Reading spiritual books.
6. Building faith in God -- known by its many names.

Perhaps the greatest aids to meditation are a strong and unqualified devotion to our Higher Self, an unwavering dedication to cooperate with the Higher Self as a wise partner, and common sense. These three factors could also be called trust, respect, reverence (or honor), and wisdom.

## **COMMON PROBLEMS IN MEDITATION**

### **Falling Asleep**

Falling asleep during meditation is a very common problem, especially for people who are just beginning to meditate or people who are taking up a new and more powerful type of meditation than they have used before. Sleepiness can also result from boredom with the meditative techniques being used, or internal resistance to personal growth. Here are some of the problems and possible remedies.

1. We are tired and fatigued before we start meditating. Some remedies are: take a nap before meditating, find a time of day when we are better rested. If we fall asleep while meditating lying down, try meditating sitting up.
2. We start the meditation alert, but fall asleep while relaxing the body. The remedy is to instruct the subconscious that the mind and Higher Self are to remain alert even while the physical body relaxes.
3. We start the meditation alert, but fall asleep while contacting higher levels of energy. The remedy is to instruct the subconscious that it does not have to try to absorb excessive amounts of energy -- just enough to lift us up to the most ideal level of consciousness.
4. We go too deep into meditation and lose consciousness. The remedy is to shorten the period of meditation or lighten the level at which

we operate. We can experience a very effective contact with the Higher Self at relative light levels of meditation. Deeper does not mean better in meditation.

5. Our meditation is dull and boring. We may need to become more active -- taking charge of our meditations so that they stir up meaningful activity.
6. None of the above. If there is no obvious reason for falling asleep, the problem usually arises because the subconscious is protecting itself from exposure and change. The remedy is to reassure the subconscious that we are not out to destroy it -- we are only interested in making some minor improvements that will create greater wellness in the subconscious.

### **Poor Concentration**

Difficulty in concentration is another problem common to the meditative state, especially for beginners. We sit down to contact the Higher Self, and soon find our mind wandering in almost every direction except the Higher Self. We are bombarded by thoughts, impressions, images, and feelings, and do not know how to sort them out. In most cases, the problem is lack of self-discipline.

The best solution is to remember that the purpose of meditation is to increase our contact with the Higher Self, and to focus attention on the themes which are in harmony with the love, wisdom, and strength of the Higher Self. Concentration in meditation will be easy if the themes and projects are interesting to us.

Still, distractions do arise and need to be managed. Here are some of the types of distractions and possible remedies:

1. **External Distractions.** The obvious solution is to meditate in a location which is relatively free of distracting noises.
2. **A Boring Technique.** If the technique provides no incentive to focus on it we become bored. Find a new incentive, or a new method of meditating.
3. **Our Attitude.** The ideal attitude for meditating is a mood of quiet optimism and confidence that something worthwhile but very subtle is happening. When attitude is the major distraction, it is important to treat the subconscious to a series of pleasant and

constructive meditative experiences, so it will be eager to cooperate in the future. For the moment, avoid the fears in the subconscious and explore the real beauty, which is in the higher nature.

4. **The Fanatical Pursuit Of "Total Concentration."** Concentration need not be perfect unwavering fixation on a single point, totally oblivious to all intruding sensations. We are to be so interested in what the Higher Self has to say to us that we just do not pay attention to the distractions which arise.
5. **The Extreme Pursuit Of All Impressions.** At the other end of the spectrum are those people who have trained themselves to pursue every stray thought, memory, or flash of mental vision which spontaneously appears to them in meditation. While the exploration of our associations and memories is a vital part of self-discovery it must be kept within rational limits and seen as only one facet of self-improvement. Common sense tells us that many stray thoughts are just that--trivial impressions unworthy of any attention.
6. **Too Interested In Things Which Are Not Our Business.** Some people are too outwardly directed, allowing virtually any perception or sound to command their attention. Their outward focus thwarts their ability to absorb the inner meaning of events. The remedy is to break the habit and put more of a premium on the inner tapestry of life.
7. **A Lack Of Ease In Working With Abstracts.** Meditation is an activity which introduces us to worlds of subtle forces and abstractions. One way to remedy this problem is to use our creative imagination to visualize a comfortable mental retreat in which we can meditate. Working with Tarot or the I Ching symbols will help us go beyond the superficial phenomena of life and seek out their inner significance, cause, and implications. In this way, we stimulate the same skills and abilities that we need in order to handle symbols and abstractions in meditation.
8. **A Guilty Conscience.** Believing we deserve to be punished, we give permission to our conscience to become highly critical of our thoughts and behavior. This problem can be corrected by training our conscience to be a constructive influence on our life, not just a critic. We train our ego self to respect our conscience, not to fight it, and we teach the "critic within us" to help, not condemn. If we start our meditation full of fear, guilt, and anxiety, this focus will probably align our ego self with the lowest levels of our conscience

and certainly not the Higher Self. If the guidance you are receiving is negative and condescending you know it is your personality talking, not your Higher Self.

9. **The Feeling Of Worthlessness.** A personality that feels rejected by spirit is likely to resist all efforts to grow, including meditation. The Higher Self will never reject the personality. But, some religions have preached that the human personality is sinful, wretched, and worthless creating the belief that we are worthless. The remedy is to appreciate the personality as a temple of Spirit, no matter how imperfect it is. The Higher Self needs the physical body to act in daily life, the emotions to manifest love in living, and the mind to express and take action for the Higher Self. The Higher Self respects the personality and seeks to use it as a vehicle for its strength, love, and wisdom. If we have a problem with self-rejection, we need to make sure to dwell an extra moment on the stages of the detachment drill, communicating wholesome messages of approval to the subconscious.
10. **The Dweller On The Threshold.** As we grow and evolve, we may strike deep substrata of old memories, habits, feelings, and convictions that strongly resist transformation. The deepest level of this resistance is part of what is known esoterically as the Dweller on the Threshold. Some people fear that they will be swept away into eternal conflict or "the dark night of the Soul." It is best to see the Dweller for what it is -- the sum of our strengths, redeemed and unredeemed, at the unconscious level of the personality. It contains a great amount of resistance to any effort to change the status quo, but it also is one of the strongest elements of our personality.

Direct confrontation will gain nothing. A far better alternative is to pursue a steady effort to be the right spiritual person and do the right spiritual thing in life. This neutralizes the resistance of the Dweller on the Threshold, ultimately transforming it. Common sense tells us the best way to reduce the strength of any kind of resistance is to build up the strength of its counterpart in spirit. If, for example, we are troubled by a persistent habit of hostility and resentment, we should spent time, at least once a week, building up the strength of our tolerance and goodwill.

It is not to the advantage of the average meditator to confront and provoke the full force of the Dweller on the Threshold. When you have full and constant rapport with the Higher Self, you may chose direct confrontation, but not until then.

In the final analysis, the central point of any effort to improve our concentration in meditation is to realize the Higher Self is interested in helping us make our meditations succeed. It cares for the personality and will respond to our honest aspirations and efforts. As we attempt to pursue the themes and ideals the Higher Self cherishes, our effort to concentrate will be magnetically reinforced by the life and love of the Higher Self. As always, it is the partnership between the Higher Self and the personality which makes meditation successful -- never the solitary efforts of either the personality or the Soul.

The nature of incarnation is personality, Soul, or Higher Self and spirit. The path of enlightenment is first the integration of personality and Higher Self, then integrating both of those into spirit. Meditation is perhaps the only real tool for completing such a process. But, meditation is only the tool, not the outcome. Enjoy your journey of Oneness.

### **Distress From Too Much Meditation**

If we exercise our subtle bodies too much in strenuous or excessively long meditations, they may become strained, congested or depleted. And, because the physical body responds very quickly to the conditions of our subtle bodies, it, too, can experience discomfort from too much meditation. Naturally, the amount and intensity of meditation which constitutes an excess will vary from person to person. Our capacity to meditate increases with practice.

It is useful to be able to recognize the symptoms which arise, both mentally and physically, from mild, medium, and major amounts of excess in meditation. These can be listed as follows:

**The Mental Symptoms Of Mild Excess:** mental fatigue, difficulty in concentrating and remembering things, and irritability, lasting for brief periods.

**The Physical Symptoms Of Mild Excess:** mild headaches, fatigue, a vague sense of fullness or a dull ache in the head or chest, a tendency to cough more than usual, and perhaps mild nausea.

**The Mental Symptoms Of Medium Strain:** vague disorientation for up to an hour after meditating, an annoying forgetfulness and difficulty in concentrating which might last several hours, and a detached or "spaced out" feeling.

**The Physical Symptoms Of Medium Strain:** moderate headaches, sinus congestion, a persistent cough, lung congestion or wheezing, moderate gastrointestinal disturbances, or the aggravation of preexisting illness.

**The Mental Symptoms Of Major Strain:** very spaced out -- the focus of attention drifts in and out between the physical plane and a deeply altered state of consciousness, bordering on a trance. Sometimes, a pseudo-mystical state will persist for quite some time, making it impossible to work effectively in any significant task. The meditator becomes very irritable, especially in public. The slightest distraction, even the presence of another, can become a source of severe irritation. There may even be hallucinations and delusions.

**The Physical Symptoms Of Major Strain:** damage to the etheric web, the structure of the etheric body. This web can be torn by intensive meditations, usually involving the practice of concentrating on the movement of energy through the chakras. Once the web is torn, the damage is difficult to repair, and there may be permanent conditions of uncontrolled muscle spasms or rippling of the muscles in the extremities and the back, irregular heart rhythm, disturbed motility of the digestive system, shaking and burning sensations in the pelvis and lower spine, and rushes of excitement.

It would be rare that any of the severe forms of psychological or physical distress would ever arise out of the practice of the techniques of Active Meditation, unless the techniques were used fanatically or distorted. Common sense alone is enough to protect the meditator from significant discomfort. If we start to feel spaced out or nauseated, we should break off our practice of meditation until our consciousness has once more become stabled.

When major psychological or physical problems develop during or after a meditation, then all meditative work should cease immediately, and not be resumed until the distress disappears and consciousness is stabilized. Even passive activities such as prayer, contemplation, and significant amounts of reading or television watching should be drastically curtailed in favor of vigorous activity in the physical that forces the attention to be fixed on the outer world. The idea behind these recommendations is to restore balance to consciousness by using the natural stabilizing influences of the physical plane. The genuine cure is to become active and productive in the physical plane -- gardening, house cleaning, sports and so on.

Naturally, far less drastic measures are required to correct the imbalances of mild or medium distress. In most cases, not meditating for a day or two will be sufficient to relieve the difficulty. Once balance is restored, the meditator should be careful not to exceed his or her practical limits of endurance or intensity. It is a little like sunburn -- we do not know how much is too much until it is too late. But once we have learned, we never have to experience excessive exposure again.

As a rule, intensely focused mental meditations, and those which involve concentrating intently on the "will", tend to produce more problems than devotional meditations, as the power contacted by thought and intention is many times greater than the power invoked by goodwill and devotion.

The ideal is to cultivate a balanced approach to spiritual growth, spending part of our time in meditation enriching the emotions, part of the time developing our mental powers of discrimination and discernment, part of our time exploring creative self-discovery, and part of the time building the spiritual will. If we balance our meditative activity in this way, there will seldom be any distress -- and if there is, it will be quite mild.

The people who develop problems of congestion while meditating are usually those who are concentrating on a specific line of development at the time:

1. Those who are rapidly developing the discriminating use of the mind are those who are most prone to congestion in the throat chakra and difficulty with coughing.
2. Those who are working vigorously to integrate the Higher Self with the personality are the ones most apt to experience congestion in the brow chakra producing stuffed sinuses.
3. Those who are cultivating a more conscious use of the will are the ones who are likely to develop headaches (congestion in the crown chakra) and mild difficulties with memory and irritability.

In these cases it is the intensity of the work they are doing which causes distress, not the technique they are using or the goal they are pushing for. They only need to decrease this intensity somewhat, not eliminate their work altogether.

What we do between meditations can also be helpful in diminishing the discomfort of mild distress. If we notice congestion of our subtle energies occurring, for example, something as simple as taking a walk can help start them circulating again. Headaches, stuffed sinuses, and hoarseness can usually be remedied by shifting our attention away from these problems and becoming involved in engrossing and productive activities.

Usually, the best cure is just to get busy and do something useful and beneficial with the energies which have built up! Our Higher Self can also guide us in how to heal and release the distress.

## **Kundalini Burnout**

The uncontrolled release of kundalini energy is the greatest danger of distress to the meditator. This is not a significant problem in meditative techniques which place the emphasis on the energies of consciousness, not the energies of form.

Kundalini energies are the subtle forces of matter. They are the most highly refined and subtle energies of etheric, emotional and mental substance. In the human system, the kundalini energies are concentrated in the chakras or force centers along the spine from its base to the top of the head. As these energies rise in their natural channels, overlying the areas of the physical spine, they transmute the subtle matter of the etheric, astral (emotional), and mental bodies, so it becomes progressively more pure. The action of the kundalini also helps prepare the subtle matter of these bodies, so it will be more responsive to integration with the energies of spirit.

Kundalini is designed to rise naturally as contact with the Higher Self is established and the purification of the subtle bodies progress. This force has been designed by spirit to serve a specific role in the integration of spirit and matter. This role is understood far better by the Higher Self than the personality. It makes common sense to let the Higher Self choose the time and the manner in which the kundalini energies will be awakened. We are to focus on making sure that the personality is attuned to the wisdom, love, and strength of spirit, and able to express these qualities maturely in daily life. If we give full attention to improving the quality of our attitudes and thoughts, the awakening of the kundalini is spontaneous, well modulated, and for the most part, uneventful. When the Higher Self awakens the kundalini naturally, it will be comfortable -- and certainly not harmful.

## **Too Many Visions**

In Active Meditation, we begin to decrease our dependency on images and visualizations after a year or so. We still use them from time to time, as appropriate, but ought to learn to begin to learn to interact with wisdom, love, grace, and courage at their level, not ours. A flood of images in meditation has nothing to do with enlightenment being right around the corner.

The cure for excessive numbers of images and visions is to remember that the major purpose of effective meditation is to enrich consciousness. The focus of attention must therefore be kept on improving the quality of consciousness -- the quality of our thoughts, feelings, and intentions. When images appear, we should seek to grasp their significance, if any,



and understand what we can do with them. We must penetrate beyond the appearance of the image and deal with its meaning, its implications, and its power. It is necessary to discern stray images and ignore them.

### **Hypersymbolism**

As in dealing with images, it is possible to overdose on symbolism to such a degree that we are not really meditating any longer. The primary problems which arise in working with symbols are:

1. We pay too much attention to the form of the symbol -- the image -- and ignore its meaning and power. We must go past the outer image of the symbol and appreciate its essence -- what it means to us and how we can use it to change our life.
2. We become a collector of symbols. One of the characteristics of symbols is that they are a primary language of the subconscious. We are to learn to communicate with the subconscious symbolically -- and conversely, learn to listen to the Higher Self symbolically.
3. We tune into the group mind associated with a symbol. Many symbols represent powerful archetypal forces which have been known for a long time. It is easy to tune into the predigested interpretation of universal symbols rather than their actual archetypal power and force.
4. We go on a color binge. Colors are a special form of symbolism, representing the quality and force of a certain type of energy. While working with color in healing is beneficial, it is more a digression from the real work of contacting the Higher Self where greater healing powers can be tapped into.

### **REVIEW OF THE GOALS OF ACTIVE MEDITATION**

1. To make the Spirit within our primary source of enlightenment, growth, and creativity.
2. To link the personality with the Higher Self, and then Spirit, thereby producing a spiritualized individual capable of responding to the forces and qualities of Spirit.
3. To ground the life of Spirit through the enlightened activities of the personality on the physical plane.

4. To learn and use the skills of devotion, understanding, and surrender -- change one's focus from personal will to divine will -- to link the personality with all three of the major aspects of divine life -- love, wisdom, and will.
5. To purify and illumine all aspects of the personality so they become agents of spiritual force.
6. To cultivate our spiritual intuition, by linking an illuminated mind with the wisdom of Spirit.
7. To nurture a constant awareness of the underlying pure love and unity in the divine presence.
8. To recognize that it is our duty and privilege to serve the purpose of Spirit.
9. The final word of what to do and not do in Active Meditation should come from only one source and none other -- Your own Inner Spirit.

## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IV**

### **AREA 1**

#### **ENTERING THE MEDITATIVE STATE**

This class is focused on the development and transformation of our personality into the essence of our Higher Self, and eventually Spirit. The tool that will be used is Active Meditation.

**The meditation being presented here is a dynamic process with three distinct stages:**

1. Contacting the Higher Self
2. Transferring some quality, energy or idea
3. Using it to transform the life of the personality

**The goals of meditation are:**

1. Growth of character and creativity
2. Obtain new revelations
3. Obtain the power to think
4. Tap the power of love
5. Contact the power to act
6. Transmute the subconscious mind

#### **ENTERING A MEDITATION**

In all, there are Four Stages: **Relaxation, Concentration, Detachment, and Attunement**. None of these stages alone constitute meditative contact with the Higher Self. They are to be used in sequence, leading to a full and active state of alertness and readiness. Always keep in mind that the purpose of meditation is to lift our conscious attention to our Higher Self, to be nourished by its qualities, and to become a better agent for expressing its purpose. The last step of any meditation is **Contemplation**, which incorporates the learning experience of the meditation into our everyday life.

#### **A TECHNIQUE FOR CONTACTING THE HIGHER SELF**

1. Ground yourself.
2. Focus on our purpose in meditation -- to contact the essence of our Higher Self and to be strengthened by its power, wisdom, and love.
3. Next, we need to relax the body and the personality to be comfortable and release tension.

4. Then, we need to concentrate our attention on the goals and themes we want to cultivate.
5. We identify with the Higher Self by the process of detachment, i.e., by knowing that we are more than the aspects of the personality and body -- that we are the essence of the Higher Self.
6. Now we attune to the love, wisdom, and power of the Higher Self through loving its qualities and being thankful for its intimate involvement in our life. We sense the deep love and acceptance embracing us and moving through us.

## **CONTEMPLATION**

The work of grounding the abstract qualities of the Higher Self in concrete thoughts, feelings, and plans of the personality at the end of a meditation is known as contemplation. Contemplation is a two-stage process that begins with meditation on a sacred subject or ideal, but concludes with laying out plans and specific intentions for putting that sacred subject or ideal to work in daily life. The activity of grounding includes quietly reflecting on the implications and meaning of the insights we have just gained, relating them to the needs and opportunities of our daily self-expression. There are several questions which can be considered during this period of contemplation:

1. What new and deeper realizations have we gained about our spiritual nature and powers?
2. How does this new understanding strengthen us in the pursuit of our daily activities?
3. How does this meditative experience alter our view and attitudes concerning our self, our work, our past, and our problems.
4. Has this strengthened our intention to take charge of improving the quality of our life and becoming more like our Higher Self?
5. What new expectation do we have about our self and our self-expression?

By reviewing questions of this nature in a contemplative mood at the end of meditation, we begin to saturate our subconscious mind with a vivid awareness of our inner life. This, in turn, helps build the expectation subconsciously that the Higher Self is able and ready to help the personality throughout the day, whenever there is a need for assistance. We begin to know that we always have access to the greater life and power of the Higher Self, not just in meditation but at all times throughout the day.

The period of contemplation at the end of a meditation is an excellent occasion to charge the personality with a special blessing for its self-expression. This can be done by dwelling on a mantra such as:

"The life of my spirit pours through me, strengthening my courage to honor my ideals and my duty to serve in all that I do and say,"  
or "May love and goodwill be the center of my self-expression."

This simple technique can refresh and reenergize the personality, so it is prepared for the activities ahead. It also expands the channel between the inner and the outer life.

## **INTEGRATION**

After **Contemplation** the final step is **Integration**. **Integration** is the art of taking the Wisdom, Love and Strength you received in Meditation and transforming your human nature to be more compatible with your spiritual nature. Spiritual Development is Integrating the Love, Wisdom, Understanding, Peace, Joy and Bliss of your Higher Self into your personality and all the levels of your consciousness.

## **SPIRITUALIZED REFRAME**

Seven Step Reframe. A frame is a nominalization of the parameters of an event. We see, hear, feel an event in a certain manner and come to a conclusion -- this is a frame. A reframe is creating a new set of parameters for that event.

1. Identify a situation or pattern you want to change.
2. Enter a meditative state, come to your heart center and connect with your Higher Self.
3. Bring that part-of-you responsible for the pattern into your heart center and surround it with love and compassion. Ask what was the intention of that part-of-you responsible for the behavior. Treat it with unconditional love and respect.
4. Engage other parts-of-you that would be creative and helpful in establishing three (3) possible alternatives which might be more useful and beneficial to everyone. Confer with your Higher Self on how it would respond to this situation and the likely outcomes that would occur with each alternative.

5. Create in your mind a movie of the new alternative pattern to be used. Make a mental picture of the situation the way your Higher Self would respond. Next, create a new inner self-talk that is supportive of this new pattern, and new external dialog that supports this new outcome. Now, step into the picture and feel how it is emotionally, making any adjustments in the movie to make it just the way your Higher Self wants it to be. You should feel love, peace, wise, and spiritual empowerment in this new pattern or situation.
6. Every part-of-you should be in harmonious agreement in dealing with this situation in this new way. If not, go back to Step 2 and work with that part-of-you that is resisting using the same techniques described above.
7. Give a "thank you" to everyone, including your Higher Self.

### **CHANGING STATES**

If you want to change your internal state, the fastest way is to change your exterior behavior and also your breathing pattern. Changing your physiology also changes your internal state. A break state is any change in your physiology or sensory input to alter your mental state. It is nearly impossible to feel depressed while you are looking up and to the right.

## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IV**

### **AREA 2**

#### **CREATING AN ENLIGHTENED SELF-IMAGE**

The function of a healthy self-image is to create a place in our subconscious mind where the power, light, and love of the Higher Self can take up residence, without being distorted or diminished. Without self-respect and a basic conviction that some part of us is worthwhile and stands for something noble, the resources of the Higher Self will just remain a lovely dream or potential.

An overly-confident self-image is just as distorted as a "poor me" self-image. Both block off the light, love and wisdom of the Higher Self and keep us surrounded by the illusions of our own creation.

Few people who have an unhealthy self-image actually recognize it as such. Instead, blinded by self-deception, they assume that what they would like to believe about themselves is their real self-image. Thus, if they think of themselves as being humble, they are not aware of their arrogant ways of expression.

A person's self-image is what she or he honestly thinks and feels about herself or himself. It is revealed in how she or he typically reacts to challenges, success, and crisis -- and in how others react to her or his customary behavior.

A healthy self-image is meant to be our basis for acting maturely and responsibly in all that we do. Instead of emotionally reacting to the events of life, we are able to respond in a manner more in harmony with our Higher Self. The healthy, ideal self-image is that point where our spiritual nature meets and interacts with our human nature.

Each person has his or her own unique virtues, talents, and strengths characteristic of a healthy self-image. But there are common aspects in every wholesome self-image. These are:

1. Our most idealistic views on life, people, duty, opportunities, and self.
2. An enlightened appreciation of the most important roles we play in life -- parenting, work, community, and so on.
3. An intelligent appraisal of the talents and qualities of consciousness we can mobilize to fulfill our duties.

4. A basic decision to play and use the healthy identities in the personality, rather than unhealthy ones. A healthy self-image will never empower illness, immaturity, or imperfection. It respects the ideal of growth.

We live in a world with imperfections -- not to mention our imperfection. The challenge is to cultivate a proper perspective on interacting with imperfection.

Such imperfections such as negative attitudes, selfishness, pessimism, fear, doubt, and prejudice may be natural to the lower aspect of human consciousness -- but they are not desirable. These aspects are to be cleansed as quickly as possible, without overdramatizing their significance by reacting emotionally to them.

There is absolutely no reason why we should impair our effectiveness as a spiritual human being by attaching our mind to confusion, fear, guilt, or depression, just because imperfection happens to exist. None of these reactions is in harmony with the life of the Higher Self.

Hating our imperfections and failures leads to self-rejection and self-contempt and, potentially, to a denial of the Higher Self. Our primary responsibility in dealing with imperfections is to heal them as best we can. If you are anxious, cultivate confidence. If you are hostile, cultivate affection. If you are discouraged, cultivate enthusiasm. Meditation is a powerful tool for cleansing the personality -- and a powerful way to heal the mind and emotions.

## **TAKING INVENTORY**

While the goal is oneness with our Higher Self and eventually with the Source or God. In reality there probably are some differences remaining:

- Between our intentions and our behavior.
- Between our understanding and the actual events of life.
- Between our conscious awareness and our sensory perceptions.
- Between our Higher Self and our personality.

The healthy self image is meant to bridge this gap, not to emphasize it. These differences are meant to be complementary, not divisive and destructive. Our higher and lower natures each have their distinct duties to perform -- but they are meant to perform them in healthy relationship with one another.

Take an inventory of the principles you stand for, the goals you have set for yourself, the noble attitudes you value, and all the other positive



aspects in your mind, emotions, talents, and ideals. These can serve as a basis for the expression of health, strength, ability, goodwill, and constructive ambition.

Once we have identified our strengths, there are three specific meditative techniques we can use to energize them with the essence and power of the Higher Self. The practice of self-respect, the practice of self-esteem, and the creation of a mental symbol. Self-respect is the approval we give to the goodness in our character and Higher Self. Self-esteem is the approval we give to the accomplishments our personality and Higher Self have made. The creation of a mental symbol enables us to focus this approval in our daily thoughts and feelings.

### **SELF RESPECT**

Fundamentally, the practice of self-respect is accepting the Higher Self as our real nature -- not our imperfections and difficulties. There is no pretending that our imperfections are an illusion.

In the presence of our Higher Self, we declare, mentally, that our most cherished values and talents are to be the dominant qualities and intentions of our thought and self-expression. We are affirming our intention to behave as the Higher Self would behave, and to think as the Higher Self would think.

Done in meditation, this activity is far more powerful than the general practice of positive thinking or affirmation, although the intent is similar.

Using this technique, you can take the best of your talents, values, ideals, and qualities, limited though they may be, to the infinitely more powerful wisdom and resources of the Higher Self.

#### **The actual steps for cultivating self-respect would include:**

1. Entering a meditative state and contacting the Higher Self, as described previously.
2. Affirming our worthiness as an individual who is seeking to be a noble person. This involves identifying with the higher aspect of personality, the doctor-teacher-parent within us, and affirming that we want to help this part of the personality grow and become stronger.

3. Affirming the value of the major roles we play in life -- for example, parent, spouse, worker, and citizen. We have the opportunity to make a contribution through these roles -- and the opportunity to touch more of our spiritual life by meeting them responsibly -- and so they are worthy of our respect.
4. Affirming our interest in nurturing various qualities of the human spirit in our own life -- for example, integrity, forgiveness, patience, courage, or endurance.

While doing this formula meditatively, it is important to dwell on each affirmation thoughtfully -- not just repeat it by rote. The Higher Self is responding by charging us with new love, power, and wisdom. Often this charging occurs unconsciously, but it does occur. The actual details of this formula can be varied to meet our own individual needs.

### **SELF-ESTEEM**

Self-esteem is a quality which is generated out of a healthy appraisal of our accomplishments and our competence -- not as a result of egotism. This differs from self-confidence and mere arrogance. Self-confidence is easily generated through self-deception. Some people declare their life is perfect -- even when it clearly is not. Arrogance is an attempt to build self-esteem by putting everyone else down while carefully preserving the illusion of superiority. It is based on a very pessimistic attitude about our own weakness.

The value of a meditative practice of self-esteem is that it builds a habit of periodically reviewing our progress and achievements in life. Far too many people dwell on their difficulties, failures, and adversities without appreciating the good they do. We need to take time to review the good things we have done -- help we have extended, projects to which we have contributed, and kindness we have projected, whether great or trivial. Then, as we review them, we should meditatively bless each one of these achievements.

Blessing is more than feeling good about what we have done. It is recognition of the significance of these worthwhile achievements and radiating goodwill and joy into the whole of our being. By blessing our legitimate achievements, great and small, we add new life to our good habits and thoughts, we boost our self-esteem, and we affirm our general usefulness in life.

**The meditative technique for the practice of self-esteem includes the following steps:**

1. We begin by entering the meditative state and contacting the Higher Self as described previously.
2. We review a number of achievements, recent or remote, which we know to be worthwhile. These do not need to be spectacular; they can be simple events, such as keeping our temper under control when provoked, living up to commitments we have made to the Higher Self.
3. We approve of these achievements, knowing they have helped us bring some of the light and power of the Higher Self into manifestation on earth. They are therefore worthy of approval--and every part of the personality which has helped in accomplishing these good things deserves our gratitude.
4. We bless these achievements, by radiating our goodwill and joy into the whole of the personality. This blessing flows from the Higher Self into the personality as we continue to concentrate on it.
5. We then reflect on the talents and qualities we had to mobilize in order to make these achievements. Before we could make these good contributions, we had to be a good person in some way, and we should recognize it -- and bless these skills and strengths as well as the achievements itself.

It is important to take enough time in meditation to perform this exercise properly, thinking each step through carefully. Our achievements are one of the most important assets we have, and they deserve proper attention. They deserve to be approved.

### **VISUALIZING AN IMAGE**

You can meditatively create a mental image which symbolically represents your ideal self-image. Of greater importance than the image is the values, attitudes, and ideals you associate with it. The value of creating a specific image for yourself is that it can help remind you of the need for self-respect and self-esteem.

A visualization, for example, could be that of a loving son or daughter of God, blessed with love and intelligence. Visualize yourself acting in ordinary circumstances of your life, that infuse certain qualities of the Higher Self, as appropriate -- great courage, a deep compassion, a

strong faith, or inspired wisdom. Such a visualization can be quite specific, and the more often we call it to mind, the stronger it becomes in consciousness. In this way, we join the commonplace -- our ordinary circumstances of life -- with the noble -- the qualities of the Higher Self.

Every time we attempt to think and act as the Higher Self would have us think and act, we straighten our self-image. Every time we consult our Higher Self for guidance on how to view some situation of life, past, present, or future, we add to the quality of our self-image. Every time we rise above the pettiness and negativity of our personality and impose our higher life on our attitude and habits, we reinforce our self-esteem.

There will always be events in our personal life that cannot be changed. Tragedies, accidents, and misfortunes happen. But the person with a healthy self-image has the advantage of a good relationship with the Higher Self and the strength of self-esteem to protect self from the pain of adversity and the wisdom to find a positive side of what appears to be defeat or failure.

Creating a healthy self-image is the first step in establishing a full partnership with the Higher Self. We are a divine creation, designed to be perfect. While the personality is not yet perfect, there is a part of us that is! The Spirit within us is Perfect.

A healthy self-image allows us to mirror the ideal strengths and qualities of the Higher Self in our personality. This kind of self-image is vital in order to enable our spiritual nature to triumph over our negativity, peevishness, and ignorance. It is a basic ingredient in the work of **practical transcendence**.

Our permanent self-image never leaves the grace and love of our Higher Self, even in the midst of the most unfavorable circumstances. A healthy self-image is our way of being heavenly in the way we act and think and feel.

Summary:

**Self-Deception** -- ask others for input about your behavior, and so on. Note: you will not be pleasing to everyone so use discernment.

**Self-Respect** -- Approval of our character.

**Self-Esteem** -- Approval of what we have accomplished

**Self-Image** -- Self-Respect and Self-Esteem merged together

## **THE TECHNIQUES FOR ESTABLISHING A HEALTHY SELF-IMAGE**

The three techniques for establishing a healthy self-image can be summarized as follows:

### **Cultivating Self-Respect**

1. We enter the meditative state and make contact with the Higher Self.
2. We affirm our worthiness as an individual who is seeking to be an enlightened person and do the right thing.
3. We affirm the value of the major roles we play in life.
4. We affirm our interest in nurturing various qualities of the human spirit in our daily life.

### **Cultivating Self-Esteem**

1. We enter the meditative state.
2. We review a number of achievements that we know to be worthwhile.
3. We approve of these achievements and are thankful for the contributions made by every aspect of our personality in achieving them.
4. We bless these achievements and the contributions of our personality.
5. We reflect on the fact that these worthwhile achievements and contributions have enriched the value of our life.

### **Visualizing An Image**

1. Having completed the work of cultivating self-respect and self-esteem for one phase of our life, we use the skill of visualization to create a mental symbol which represents our ideal self-image.
2. Then visualize yourself acting in ordinary circumstances of life infused with the specific qualities of the Higher Self.
3. We charge the symbol with the power of the Higher Self.

**SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IV**  
**AREA 3**  
**DEFINING VALUES AND GOALS**

By knowing the purpose of the Higher Self and translating it into a system of noble values and goals, we organize our character with structure, stability, and direction.

The person who models his or her values, and has organized his or her talents and ideals in the pursuit of specific goals makes a valuable partner for the Higher Self. This is the alignment that is required for the Higher Self to have meaningful expression on earth.

Unfortunately, not all people are ready to act in harmony with their Higher Self. In fact, the majority of people are much more aware of what they do not want than what they do want. **Most people are more concerned with what others think about them than in taking actions which honor the wisdom of their Higher Self.**

The Higher Self does not idly dream about the future or about what could be attained. It has a clear understanding of its purpose, goals and destiny. While its time schedule is flexible, since it depends on the cooperation of the personality, its purpose and destiny are not variable.

If we coordinate our efforts in meditation and in daily living with the purpose of the Higher Self, we will establish an enlightened structure of direction, stability, and power. We must be aligned with something greater than our dreams, fantasies, and emotions.

An individual's inability to deal with challenge, conflict, and responsibility becomes a grave limitation restricting the unfoldment of the plans of the Higher Self. That person is unable to channel the power of self-expression effectively, and this affects the whole scope of one's performance in life.

Our values are what we stand for. It is an idea, commitment, promise, or principle we have chosen to cultivate and cherish. A value will withstand in the face of pressure. An example of an enlightened value would be a high regard for integrity and personal honor, so strong that we cannot be corrupted by any offer of money, position, advancement, fame, or personal favors.

The values created solely from the experiences and beliefs of the personality are transitory at best. We outgrow them eventually. The values founded on the principles and qualities of the Higher Self are permanent. We grow into them, as we discover more about them.

Our goals are what we hope to achieve, the specific objectives we strive toward in personal growth, work, self-understanding, service, relationships, and responsibility. The noblest goals are those derived from the purpose and destiny of the Higher Self. If our goals are defined in terms of amassing more money, inducing others to do our work for us, or establishing that society owes us certain "rights," they will orient us towards the pursuit of material satisfaction, not enlightenment. If our goals are defined in a context of making a more intelligent or powerful contribution to life, to improve the quality of our community, environment, and civilization, they will stabilize us in the life of the Higher Self.

The function of goals is to give direction to our day-to-day activities. Without goals, we tend to wander aimlessly through life, accomplishing very little. With unenlightened goals, we will accomplish more, but much of it may be counter-productive. Enlightened goals, however, moves us forward in life in harmony with the basic purpose and destiny of the Higher Self.

Purpose is the general urge or power to do something, whereas a goal is the objective which will be reached by harnessing that impulse. Goals and purposes are the necessary components needed in establishing a structure of direction, stability, and power in our consciousness. They insure that the power of the Higher Self will be used properly, and not diverted into meaningless activity.

Enlightened goals, based on enlightened values, provide a structure in which we can express our human qualities. This is not a simplistic focus on a single goal; rather, it is a rich and multidimensional hierarchy of many different goals, embracing every level of life. These goals pertain to different aspects of our being -- work, creativity, relationships, and self-fulfillment. Together, they give our consciousness a holistic structure for thinking, planning, feeling, and acting.

Our values and goals are the tools we use to manage power, direct the activities of our life, and sustain useful work. They are a necessary part of our humanity.

### **ASKING QUESTIONS**

An ideal time for defining values and goals is during meditation. In meditation, it is much easier to understand the purpose and destiny of the Higher Self upon which our values and goals are based.

This work will use a number of meditative skills, the most fundamental being our capacity to invoke spiritual ideals; secondly, to personify the wisdom of the Higher Self as a very wise counselor with whom we can consult, ask specific questions, and obtain helpful answers.

In determining our values in life, the primary question might be: "What kind of character do I want to build?" In determining our goals, the primary question could be: "What do I want to accomplish in my life?"

The intention is not to answer these questions from our normal waking consciousness, but rather in the context of our spiritual ideals. The process of answering them ought to include a review of our experiences in life, what has worked for us and what has not, our beliefs and aspirations, our intentions, and our highest inspirations.

If you have trouble asking and answering such abstract questions in meditation, the use of the personified Higher Self as a counselor or wise teacher can help.

It is important to keep in mind that not every random thought which passes through our awareness is necessarily a message from the Higher Self. It is possible to interject personifications with our wishes and desires for spectacular results. But, if we are working in a meditative state with the focused intention to tap the guidance of our Higher Self, then the majority of impressions which arise within us will probably be helpful. We are to use common sense and discernment when sorting out the impressions that will be our best guide.

It is easy to work with the personification of the wise counselor -- we simply ask the basic question we have in mind, pause for an answer, then follow up with as many secondary questions as necessary, until we have obtained the new understanding we seek. The wise counselor will not initiate this process for us; we must be willing to take charge and ask questions and pursue hints. This process will develop a good flow of ideas in the form of mental impressions, images, flashes of insight, or possibly even conversation.

## **DEFINING VALUES**

The key question for defining values is: "What kind of character do I want to build?" This question will lead us to pose other questions about how we want to behave and our attitudes towards various responsibilities in life. Here are a few of the secondary questions that come up:

How do I want to respond to opportunities of growth?

What should be my attitude towards authority?

How should I respond to people in authority positions?



What should be my ideal response to failure?

What should be my ideal response to criticism?

What should be my ideal response to discouragement?

How should I respond to the temptation to cheat, tell small lies, or take advantage of others?

What should be my attitude towards people I work with?

What should be my ideal response to the attempts of others to force me to accept their values and beliefs?

How do I view the commitments, promises, and pledges I have made?

We must answer these questions in the context of our own life experience. Our actual behavior speaks more of our values than our words. It is not enough to "accept responsibility," unless we are willing to make binding commitments--either to our self or to others -- and follow through on them.

Putting a modest amount of effort to review our values and attitudes in this way will reveal many insights into the nature of our character and help us to see more clearly what we need strengthened, as well as what is crying out for change. You will find a need to relate each value to all the others, creating a hierarchical structure which enables you to deal consistently with complex issues.

Our intent, in all cases, is to define the ideal qualities which should be in charge of our self-expression. It is not intended to create self-condemnation, nor to produce wallowing in guilt or remorse, although you may occasionally touch the fringes of such feelings.

## **DEFINING GOALS**

The primary question for defining goals is: "What do I want to accomplish with my life? This question will prompt other questions to be carefully reviewed with the wise counselor, who embodies the wisdom of the Higher Self. Some of these questions would be:

What contributions do I want to make in my life -- and in what order?

What are the best ways to honor my skills, talents, abilities, and inspirations through self-expression?

How can I do this through my work?

How can I do this through my relationships?

How can I do this through my growth as a human being?

In what ways do I want to help others?

What are the most important projects I am involved in?

How well am I expressing this priority?

What am I looking for in terms of emotional fulfillment?

How do I define it?

How do I define physical comfort and security? What priority does this have in my life?

Generally, this kind of review leads us to unfinished business, half-filled dreams, and partially completed projects. With the wisdom of the Higher Self, we will know what to pursue, and what to let go. At the same time, we are likely to come up with new ideas.

The more we reflect on our goals in this manner, the more we will improve our ability to define our major objectives without serious distortion. As a result, we will become more adept in expressing the purpose of the Higher Self in all that we do.

## **THE POWER**

It is not enough to desire our values and goals. We must add the resources and power of the Higher Self. We must energize our intention to act. A desire is an emotional craving to acquire or avoid some condition or object. An intention comes from the will-to-act of the Higher Self. It is the basic power or impulse of enlightened self-expression. It is through our intentions that we tap and channel the power of purpose.

Every human being has tremendous resources of power, but few people have learned to tap them, and even fewer have mastered the expression of this power. The Higher Self is the generator of our power. This power flows into the personality when the purpose of the personality is aligned with the Higher Self. To access this power, we must act, think, and feel in harmony with the purpose of the Higher Self.

The Higher Self's purpose can be translated into the personality through the medium of values and goals. When the whole system is complete, the power that can be expressed through the personality is tremendous.

The use of seed thoughts is the meditative skill which is most effective in charging our intention to act in harmony with our values and goals. Any value or goal can be energized in this way

If, for example, we sense a tendency to procrastinate and miss opportunities, we need to put a higher priority on the value of acting with efficiency and diligence, and the goal of taking greater initiative in life.

**We do not dwell on the problem of procrastination.** We dwell on the qualities we want to bring forth. Examples of seed thoughts which would serve this purpose would be:

The readiness to act.

Enthusiasm for timely action.

I do my work with thoroughness

While using these seed thoughts, we know the Higher Self is supporting us with the perfect amount of power and determination we need to strengthen our values, goals, and intentions to act.

You only need to focus your attention on the seed thought for a minute or two meditatively. You are literally adding to your subconscious mind the power you need to implement your ideals and values. At this point you are energizing your dedication to expressing yourself in an enlightened, mature way!

Later on, you can reinforce that idea and its intended results in your personal life through NLP techniques.

## **CHANNELS FOR GROWTH**

The process of defining and energizing our values and goals is an important part of integrating the Higher Self and the personality. While the defining of values and goals does not need to be repeated every day, the process of energizing them should become a regular habit in our program of self-development.

Esoterically, as we invoke and define a spiritual sense of purpose, we create channels for our spiritual growth. We tap the divine will of the Higher Self and establish lines of force between this source of power and our self-expression. This prepares our personality to receive and contain more of the tremendous power of our Higher Self.

### **Summary**

- a) Your values are your actual behavior, not your words. They are what you stand for.
- b) The values of the personality are transitory. The values founded on the universal principles of your Higher Self are permanent.
- c) Goals are what you hope to achieve. They give direction to your activity.

- d) Purpose is an urge to do something. And, when combined with your goals, your urge to accomplish something now has direction.
- e) Discover and follow the goals and purpose of your Higher Self.

## **TECHNIQUES FOR DEFINING VALUES AND GOALS**

### **Defining Values**

1. We begin by entering the meditative state and contacting the Higher Self.
2. We focus our attention on the wisdom of our Higher Self, personifying it as a wise counselor we can question.
3. Asking oneself the basic question, "What kind of character do I want to build," we explore the nature of our spiritual ideal and how we intend to express them through our behavior, thoughts, commitments, duties, and responsibilities.
4. This meditation should be repeated periodically, with a record kept of the results.

### **Defining Goals**

1. We begin by entering the meditative state and contacting the Higher Self.
2. We focus our attention on the wisdom of our Higher Self, personifying it as a wise counselor we can question.
3. Asking oneself the basic question: "What do I want to accomplish in life," we explore the trends and directions of our life, looking for insights into how we can add greater meaning, talent, and productivity to our activities, by defining more enlightened goals. The goals we set should honor the purpose of our Higher Self and its will-to-life.
4. This meditation should be repeated periodically, with a record kept of the results.

## **Charging Values and Goals With Power**

1. We begin by entering the meditative state and contacting the Higher Self.
2. Selecting a value or goal we wish to energize, we rest briefly in the faith and trust that the Higher Self has the perfect measure of power to support us in our effort to express it.
3. We then use the meditative skill of working with a seed thought, which we activate by concentrating on our intention (not just the desire or thought) to express the particular value and attain the particular goal we have in mind.
4. This concentration is held for a minute or two, with the expectation that the purpose of the Higher Self is being embodied in this value or goal. As we concentrate on this seed thought, we should be aware that the Higher Self is a senior partner working with us, both in meditation and in daily life.

## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IV**

### **AREA 4**

#### **MENTAL HOUSECLEANING**

The mind can be thought of as a rather large home with many rooms. These rooms represent the invisible and somewhat abstract "aspects" of consciousness -- the values, ideals, self-image, the subconscious, the ego, the unconscious, thoughts, emotions, habits, the Higher Self, and Spirit.

So, the mind, or "home", can be thought of as the sanctuary of the light of the Higher Self on earth, with the inhabitants of this home being our self-image, values, sense of purpose, and talents. Our conscious thoughts and feelings are in the living room. The study is where we reflect, plan, and formulate our goals; a nursery, where we tend our newly born thoughts; a dining room, where we take nourishment; and bedroom, where our subconscious and unconscious memories "sleep."

This mental home is meant to be a temple for our heavenly treasures of talent, quality, and inspiration; a haven in the midst of the pressures and stress of daily living. From time to time, it may need a good cleaning just like a normal house.

Mental housecleaning involves recognizing the areas of weakness and imperfection, as well as the deficiency in our character, feelings and habits -- then using the power and love of the Higher Self to cleanse and update these areas replacing them with something new and better.

This is your household, and you are responsible to act as an intelligent caretaker of it. Problems and faults are created within us, not outside ourselves, so we cannot reasonably expect anyone else to come in and do our housecleaning. It is our responsibility -- our personal domain -- and we must take good care of it.

Our quality of life is directly affected by the conditions of our mental household. If we harbor hostility and rage toward others, we will live in the sea of our anger and resentment. If we create competitiveness and greed, we will dwell in the atmosphere of jealousy, suspicion, and the fear that these conditions create. If we are arrogant and rude with other people, we will find ourselves under constant attack from others, as people mirror back the same treatment given them.

By contrast, if we act with integrity in all that we do, even when it is more convenient to act otherwise, we will find that our mental household is well lit by the presence of high ideals.

If we act with spirit guiding us, we will discover new talents and skills growing in the "sun room" of our mental household. As we grow, we will constantly find new rooms in our mental household -- rooms which we were not previously aware, filled with treasure and promise.

Very few people have allowed their mental household to be so run-down that it is no longer fit to inhabit, but most do have a number of problem areas in need of major repair and cleaning. Some keep reappearing, year after year, bringing with them new issues of frustration and disappointment. These chronic problems block our better efforts to integrate the Higher Self and the personality. It is important to learn the basic principles of mental housecleaning.

### **CHECKING IT OUT**

The first step in mental housecleaning is to check out what is useful and healthy, what is old and worn out, and what is soiled and needs cleaning. Again, beware of self-deception -- check everything out. A strong intention to be an ethical person will protect us from the temptation to cover up difficulties and immaturity.

This examination is not a witch hunt. Looking for reasons to dislike ourselves will hurt, rather than help us. Likewise, if we always find excuses for our behavior we will not make any progress.

It is best to determine the source of our thoughts, habits, feelings and memories. What was the purpose of these patterns? Do they serve a useful purpose now?

By understanding the source of any given pattern of behavior or attitude, we will learn whether it is actually a pattern of our own creation, something that came in the back door, or something that was left behind by visitors. You will discover that many attitudes, habits, and thoughts that were once quite useful to you have now lost their importance, thereby requiring revision or elimination of that pattern.

There are seven major sources of inputs into the contents of our mental household. The first three are self-created. They are:

1. **Our Childhood Experiences.** At birth, our mental household is empty of any significant personality patterns, attitudes, or habits. Almost immediately, we begin to construct the foundation of our character, modeling our parents, siblings, and anyone else who is close to us during our early years. What we experience as a child, and how we respond to it, becomes one of the main sources of the contents of our personal household as an adult.

Remember, childhood is a time of immaturity and naiveté. As a child, we did not have the intelligence, competence, or independence to choose our responses to life with wisdom and self-discipline. Consequently, the habits, attitudes, beliefs, convictions, and feelings that have been left intact since childhood may no longer be appropriate.

While most adults have revised some of their childhood programming, there is frequently an astonishing amount upon which the average person has not touched. As these influences are uncovered, it is important to quickly update them and replace them with new, more useful, patterns.

2. **Our Adult Experiences.** Every adult has had a wide range of experiences, some pleasant, some unpleasant, some frightening, some educational, some frivolous. Many of these experiences have a powerful impact on our attitudes, habits, beliefs, convictions and behavior. Sometimes this impact was constructive, helping us to grow. In other cases, it has undermined our self-esteem, and restricted our love for living.

Often, the changes that we make in attitude and behavior after a certain experience make sense only in the narrow context of that one event, but are actually applied broadly in life. We are to develop a balance whereby no one event or experience in our life cripples the rest of our self-expression or blocks out the light and love of the Higher Self.

3. **Our Hopes, Speculations, And Dreams About Ourselves And Our Lives.** We can spend a lot of time thinking about what has been, what might have been, and what might happen, but this could be time spent wisely if we review the past and determine more enlightened ways to act. Much of the time, we tend to worry that events are not happening the way they should, and so we create a host of things to fear. Often, this fantasy world becomes a more powerful influence on our thinking and behavior than the actual experiences of daily life. Since such influences on our attitudes and behavior patterns are not healthy, we need to dispel them with common sense.

The next two categories are from sources that are not self-created.

4. **The Thoughts And Feelings Of People We Have Known.** We are all constantly influenced by the habits, attitudes, prejudices, and beliefs of the people with whom we associate. Sometimes this



influence is direct -- such as a person adopting the philosophy and traits of a teacher he or she admires, or another person rejecting the philosophy and traits of a teacher he or she dislikes.

Many times the effects are indirect, such as in the case of being subtly influenced by the negative, pessimistic attitudes of people with whom we frequently associate. Psychic influences of the thoughts, feelings, and attitudes of others upon us can be as powerful as or more powerful than, the physical influence.

The problem with recognizing these external influences is that they emerge in our own feelings, thoughts and urges, appearing to be our own. Once we have established a clear "baseline" that represents our personal attitudes, convictions, beliefs and habits, we can then spot and eliminate those which are alien to our normal pattern of behavior.

- 5 . **The Influence Of Mass Consciousness.** Our psychic susceptibility to the influences of other people also includes receptivity to the forces of mass consciousness. Mass consciousness is the collective power of thought, feeling, opinion, and attitude in the whole of humanity. It tends to play a large role in conditioning the attitudes and behavior of anyone who does not have a well-defined sense of individuality, a good-self image, or oneness with spirit.

The challenge in pulling away from the general trend of opinion and behavior can be intense. With a baseline of your attitudes and values, you will not be confused by the impact that mass consciousness has upon your mental household.

The final two sources that influence the contents of our mental household arise from deeper levels within us and they are normally outside of our awareness.

6. **The Contents Of Our Unconscious Mind.** The unconscious portions of our being is more than a storehouse for repressed unhappy memories and pain. It is a warehouse for our noblest values, urges, talents, qualities and convictions. All our character patterns, good and bad, are found in the unconscious mind. The unconscious mind is designed to keep the automatic functions of the personality operating smoothly. However, not all the automatic functions are useful and beneficial to oneself or others.

For the most part, these patterns and qualities are already present in the unconscious at the time of physical birth, as latent or potential influences which do not become apparent consciously until

the personality matures and begins to act and react in life. By looking for attitudes, habits, and patterns of behavior -- the very structure of our mental household -- we become aware of the content of the unconscious.

7. **The Ideals And Qualities Of The Higher Self.** These are the riches of our mental household -- the power to heal, the wisdom to solve problems, the compassion to forgive, the strength and courage to act, the power of inspiration, and the benevolence to act with kindness and charity. These qualities represent right thinking, right feeling, and right action in any circumstance.

Some people are uncomfortable and edgy in the presence of genuine spiritual ideals, because their ordinary way of thinking and acting are so far out of harmony with them. The purpose of mental housecleaning is to harmonize our household of attitudes, memories, habits, and feelings, so that the ideals and qualities of the Higher Self can be expressed without serious distortion -- consciously, subconsciously, and unconsciously. Our goal is to restore order and fill the whole house with light and love.

### **TAKING CHARGE**

Mental housecleaning is an activity which requires skill and dedicated effort. Recognize that nothing will happen to improve the quality of our life until we initiate action to change it. Remember you are not alone in this effort, the greater, wiser part of you takes care of the lesser in meditation. Besides, you have already defined this "greater" part within you to a certain extent, through your work to improve your self-image and define your values and goals.

The time spent in clarifying the basic issues of self-respect, self-esteem, and our values is very important before we move into any major effort of mental housecleaning. We need to establish the baseline of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. This is important in discerning what needs to be kept, what needs to be strengthened, what needs to be purified, and what needs to be completely removed. This baseline provides the direction, stability and power to assist us in our work of transformation -- the direction of purpose, the stability of our values, and the power of our inner strength.

### **THE WISE AND BENEVOLENT PARENT**

To release problems of our own making, the use of role playing works best in meditation, such as imagining yourself as a wise and loving parent who is seeking to help a child improve his behavior and attitudes. The role of the wise and loving parent, of course, represents the greater force within us, and reflects being in harmony with our Higher Self.

The child is a symbol for the character deficiency we are seeking to change. In playing this role in our mind, we bring the child into our heart center, surrounding it with love. Then, we gently explain to the child that its behavior is no longer appropriate, although it may have been appropriate in the past. We then have the child explore new options that would be more useful and beneficial to everyone. We project key thoughts into the attitudes of the child, while we are also giving the child healing and loving. We lovingly focus the power and authority of the Higher Self upon the ability of the child to respond to our new direction and guidance. After this is completed, we then spend a few minutes mentally rehearsing the ideal pattern of behavior or attitude, so that it becomes firmly impressed in the mind of the child as well as our own subconscious mind.

For example, if working to treat the problem of shyness, we would begin by playing the role of a wise and loving parent who was very comfortable in acting with confidence, courage, and a sense of dignity. In other words, we recognize that there is a part of us that already knows how to express these qualities, and so we play that part.

Having identified with the confidence, courage, and dignity within us, we begin educating the timid child within us about the need to become more confident and poised -- all of this transpiring as a mental dialogue in a light meditative state. We briefly instruct and demonstrate how much better life will be living with confidence and dignity (keep this to a couple of minutes at most). Then, in the role of the benevolent parent, we draw the child to us, embracing it with the healing power of our love and concern, and project to it a number of reassuring, cleansing thoughts. Playing the role of a wise and loving parent is an excellent way to maintain the necessary detachment so that we do not get pulled down into the problems of the subconscious.

Throughout this process, we should remain alert to cues and signals which may lead us to a more complete understanding. We may receive a flash of insight as to an event, which we had repressed, and which we now need to resolve. Although we will want to feel free to explore and investigate greater implications to our problems, the desired activity is to devote self to the healing and enriching of our mental household -- not just probing for new insights and analyzing their woes.

The communication with the child must be as simple as possible. We must endeavor to touch the spiritual ideal and archetypal force of the Higher Self to convey our convictions, attitudes, and intentions. The secret lies in the drawing of the problems and the deficiencies of the child into the loving aura of the parent, where they are purged and repaired.

Creating a positive healing state of consciousness into which we draw our problems is the heart of this technique of role-playing. The light and love of the Higher Self will dissolve the problems, the difficulties and distortions.

### **FOLLOWING YOUR CONVICTION**

To release problems we have picked up through osmosis, from others and from mass consciousness, the best meditative skill to use would be that of seed thoughts. We are responsible for our own mental household. This is not a crusade to reform other people, or to have an excuse to avoid responsibilities for our problems by blaming others. We simply allowed our thoughts and attitudes to be polluted by outside forces.

Instead of fighting the outside forces, it is more effective to strengthen our own expression of good. Having discovered the pollution of our attitudes or moods by someone else or mass consciousness, we take the time in meditation to carefully establish or restore our own alignment with archetypal forces and our spiritual ideals. We then focus the power of these forces and ideals into the thoughts, feelings, and moods of our subconscious through the use of seed thoughts, holding each seed thought for several minutes so it saturates our conscious mind.

If you have taken on a behavior pattern that is exhibited by someone around you, such as being critical of others, there is no point in focusing on their problem since it is out of our control. Instead, we need to focus on the spiritual ideal of non-judgment and the archetypal force of unconditional love, filling our awareness completely with these qualities. We should then rest in the seed thought that actively working towards proper goals with our Higher Self is the force which eradicates criticalness -- not being critical. The force of this conviction, focused in our seed thought, will drive away and disperse the power of the thought which had polluted us.

### **PENETRATING THE UNCONSCIOUS**

Persistent problems from our unconscious mind are most effectively removed by using a combination of role-playing and seed thoughts. It generally takes more than role-playing to penetrate to levels of awareness not usually responsive to conscious commands, but it is a good starting place. Once we have drawn the child into the loving aura of the parent, however, we must spend extra time flooding the moods and attitudes of the child with well-directed seed thoughts based on the spiritual ideals of the Higher Self and divine archetypes.

If a pattern has existed since early childhood, frequently this indicates that the pattern is from the deep unconscious -- a pattern brought in at birth in the unconscious and activated early in life. If, for example, we have been self-centered and demanding since early childhood, we are probably dealing with a pattern of arrogance rooted in the unconscious levels. On the other hand, if this pattern appeared in our teenage years, we are probably dealing with a pattern rooted in the subconscious.

Since meditation deals simultaneously with transcendent and personal elements of consciousness, it has tremendous power in revising and reforming the patterns of the unconscious mind. Psychotherapy, positive thinking, and hypnosis generally fail to harness the transcendent levels needed for healing in the unconscious mind.

## DAILY LIVING

All self-improvement starts with the realization that the world treats us in the same manner we treat the world. We cannot treat the world wisely and lovingly if our own mental household is in disarray. The work of mental housecleaning may not eliminate all conflict and difficulty in our life, but it will allow the power, courage, intelligence, and goodwill to flow from the Higher Self so we can act maturely in all that we do. Mental housecleaning should be a daily meditative routine -- and a lifelong habit.

### Summary

- a) Your Mental House includes your: values, ideals, self-image, subconscious, unconscious, consciousness, thoughts, emotions, habits, along with your Higher Self and Spirit.
- b) Accept where you are at and go from there. Avoid self-deception.  
Be ethical.
- c) Spirit is Integrity
- d) We have many sources of our thoughts, habits and feelings.
- e) Nothing changes until you initiate **Action**.
- f) Your Mental Household is to free up the power, courage, love, intelligence and goodwill of your Higher Self so you can act more spiritually in everything you do.

## A TECHNIQUE FOR MENTAL HOUSECLEANING

**The techniques for mental housecleaning can be summarized as follows:**

1. We begin by entering a meditative state and contacting the Higher Self.
2. We identify the source of the problem or deficiency we seek to repair and clearly define in our mind the constructive traits or positive qualities which will heal it.
3. If it is a problem of our own making, we play the role of the wise, benevolent parent who seeks to help his or her child grow and become more mature. We explain the value of the change to the child and then draw the imperfections of the child into our loving aura, projecting the strength of the ideal way of behaving into the attitudes of the child, to heal them.
4. If it is a problem resulting from pollution by others or mass consciousness, we dwell on the appropriate spiritual ideal or divine archetype which will neutralize the difficulty. From this ideal or archetype, we generate a seed thought for how we generally want to think and behave. As we saturate our awareness with the force of this seed thought, it expels the pollution which is troubling us.
5. These techniques generally need to be repeated many times to achieve full effectiveness.

## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IV**

### **AREA 5**

#### **HEALING THE EMOTIONS**

What the majority of people have not yet learned is that the most insidious diseases which afflict us are not the physical ones -- they are the emotional ones. These are the diseases of rage, fear, grief, guilt, anger, cruelty, jealousy, pessimism, immaturity, and selfishness.

To understand the purpose of emotions and use of emotions, we must consider them from the point of view of the Higher Self, which seeks to use the emotions, the mind, and the physical body for creative self-expression of Spirit.

From the point of view of the Higher Self, the purpose of the emotions is to serve as a vehicle for the expression of spiritual love in daily life. In practice this translates into using the emotions to:

- Touch others with hope, kindness, compassion, gentleness, forgiveness, and nurturing support.
- Aspire to the best -- whether it is the highest level of competence we can achieve in our work, or the noblest ethics and ideals of life -- and be devoted to whatever is good.
- Keep faith in our spiritual values and goals.
- Form a bond of love and oneness with others, with society, and with humanity as a whole.

Ideally, the emotions should be kept free of fear, anger, guilt, sadness, jealousy, pettiness, and selfishness. This is not always an easy ideal to keep, especially in an environment where these emotional diseases are accepted as commonplace and healthy. But to the degree that we let our emotions slip into these negative conditions, we compromise their ability to express spiritual love.

Some people attempt to use the emotions to generate motivation, evaluate conditions and make decisions, and set goals. From the point of view of the Higher Self, it is the will which generates motivation. It is the mind which is designed to evaluate conditions. It is the Higher Self which sets goals. The proper use of emotions is to enrich our self-expression -- to create a climate of grace, compassion, and benevolence in which our relationships, creative efforts, and self-expression can blossom.

## **TREATING THE CAUSE**

There is a big difference between treating the symptom of hurt feelings and actually curing the fundamental flaws of consciousness. If we have hurt feelings, we tend to nurse them and exaggerate the damage that has been done to us, instead of trying to increase our tolerance of others and our self-respect.

Lets examine five major areas of difficulty leading to emotional distress, and the adjustments which will be required in each in order to achieve a greater state of emotional well-being. These five problem areas are:

1. The lack of ethics and a goal-centered life.
2. The lack of self-control and self-restraint.
3. Obsessions and addictions.
4. Congested self-expression.
5. The need for positive spiritual qualities.

### **LACK OF ETHICS AND GOALS**

Emotions have no inherent stability of their own. They are highly fluid and easily influenced by external conditions and the moods of others. If we are lead by our emotions it is impossible to achieve continuity of character and purpose. What is needed is a well-defined core of ethics and goals, which will serve to give our emotions focus, so they are used in noble self-expression, not reactiveness.

Values and goals should never be based on the emotions; they must be built upon the spiritual ideals and purposes of the Higher Self. It is necessary to build an adequate foundation of values and goals in order to heal the emotions.

### **LACK OF SELF-CONTROL**

Even with a good foundation of values and goals, we find difficulty at times to mobilize them sufficiently to control our emotions. Good intentions can be overwhelmed by the force of old habits and reactive patterns. This means we do not always handle our feelings with perfect self-control or self-restraint. We may react to insults with anger before we realize that we do not actually want to respond in this way.



The emotions are meant to be the expression of spiritual love. This can only happen if our feelings have been aligned with our values and goals, as well as with love, and are responsive to intelligent guidance and discipline from the mind and the Higher Self.

This effort in no way involves repressing the emotions or creating a climate of emotional indifference. It simple means we have chosen to express our emotions with common sense, purpose, and the guidance of the Higher Self. We use emotions to enrich our life and self-expression, not detract from them; to help others, not to harm them.

We can increase self-determination by taking the time to examine and reflect on the elements which actually lead us, push us, or drive us to act, especially in the small insignificant moments of life. A good way to conduct this examination is to take a few minutes at the end of the day to reflect on how often our actions were guided by intelligent decisions, and how often we simply let old habits and attitudes automatically control our self-expression.

Once we have discovered the major area(s) in which we lack control of our emotions, we can strengthen our self-determination by:

1. Invoking the spiritual ideal we should have been expressing through our emotions at the time we lost control.
2. Dedicating our ego to expressing this spiritual ideal more consistently and effectively.
3. Meditating on seed thoughts that embody the strength of the ideal.

Throughout, we must recognize the value of taking charge of our life and our emotional self-expression.

## **OBSESSIONS AND ADDICTIONS**

The emotions operate by building up a magnetic rapport with anything they happen to like, and a magnetic rejection of anything they dislike. This process can lead to serious problems of imbalance in the reactive personality:

- The compulsion to have a certain experience over and over again.
- A fanatical obsession with certain ideas or topics.
- Addiction to the gratification of desires or cravings.

Compulsions, obsessions, and addictions in any form are by definition, a mistake, for they represent unbalanced states of thinking, feeling, and action. Emotions will gladly cooperate with compulsive and addictive tendencies, because it gives them license to indulge in wild excesses.

Obsessions and addictions are healed by restoring balance to our understanding of the spiritual role of emotions. Buddha called it "The Noble Middle Path," which postulates that happiness can never be found through the pursuit of excess. Our efforts to create this balance can be effectively supported by using the following meditative skills:

- Role playing with the wise parent embodying the proper use of the emotions and working to change the compulsive behavior of the child within.
- Seed thoughts, such as "the balanced expression of love" or "the dominion of my Higher Self."

### **CONGESTED SELF-EXPRESSION**

The emotions are designed to contribute to the self-expression of the noble qualities, themes, and skills of the Higher Self in daily life. If we fail to gather and express our spiritual talents and capacities, through repression or inhibition of any kind, our life force will stagnate and become congested. We will experience hardening of our self-expression, a curtailing of the natural flow of the life force to our mind, emotions, and physical body.

Self-expression has two major ways of being congested. First, by giving an excessive amount of attention to behaving in negative ways, thereby excluding spiritual qualities. This person is preoccupied with negative expression. The second is by giving insufficient attention to expressing our values, our self-respect, and our dedication to our goals. This person could be timid, or easily intimidated by others, or simply too passive towards life in general. We congest our self-expression by not making enough effort to honor it.

The solution for a congested self-expression is to break up the attitudes that are "damming" our consciousness and replace them with attitudes that serve as channels for our self-expression. If our problem is the presence of the wrong kind of self-expression, we draw these elements into the loving aura of the parent within and heal them. However, if we are lacking an affirmative self-expression, we will have to create one. This can be done by contemplating ideal ways of acting in various situations, and then charging these ideal ways of acting through the use of seed thoughts, such as "the dedication to act in a spiritual way."

## CREATING POSITIVE SPIRITUAL QUALITIES

Most people spend their time focused on overcoming their problems, believing that eventually life will magically fall into place. This is most obvious in the emotional department of consciousness. Emotional problems cannot simply be removed; they must be replaced by a more spiritual option. To believe -- in good intentions, positive thoughts, and trust in God -- is not enough for spiritual living. While these are excellent starting points, we must convert the spiritual qualities of the Higher Self into skillful emotional expressions of the Higher Self. Otherwise, our emotions will remain empty -- even while the Higher Self is full.

Enlightened emotional expression based on spiritual qualities are not developed by reading a book. They result from our efforts to act in harmony with our spiritual values and spiritual ideals. Some of the most important spiritual qualities to develop an enlightened expression of the emotions include:

Devotion	Faith	Compassion
Cheerfulness	Charm	Caring
Tolerance	Forgiveness	Harmony
Cooperation	Affection	Sharing
Generosity	Goodwill	Tenderness
Enthusiasm	Optimism	Reverence
Aspiration	Gratitude	Patience
Love	Non-judgment	Selfless service
Power	Joy	

These qualities are all designed to be fully expressed by us in our daily living. As we learn to do so, our quality of life will steadily increase.

## DIVINE LOVE

The technique for healing emotions must attune us to the abstract nature of divine love while keeping us focused on learning to honor and express the quality of love in meaningful ways in our relationships, our work, our attitudes, and our desires.

Remember, the power to heal our emotions lies in the Higher Self -- not in the emotions themselves. We must go beyond our hurt feelings and urges, and be educated by those spiritual qualities which can actually transform and heal the emotions. We must acclimate our total self to the proper wavelength of healing, which is the love of the Higher Self.

The love of the Higher Self links us immediately with the Source of Love. Love is not an emotion, it is a spiritual quality. It can be expressed through the emotions and other aspects of the personality, including the mind. It is through the cohesiveness and inclusiveness of divine love that all elements of self-expression are drawn into their intended wholeness.

Therefore, to learn, attune, and practice the presence of divine love is the most important element of healing the emotions. The **skill of aspiration** teaches us to lift up our mind and heart and become filled with divine love. You are being responsive to the vibration of divine love. The **skill of devotion** teaches us to love all creation -- to honor and nurture the potential for divine oneness in all life forms. We love cherishing the perfection and compassion of Spirit, the Higher Self, and all creation. The **skill of faith** teaches us to remain constant in our alignment to the divine presence of love as we heal our emotions. We increase our appreciation of the healing power of love through faith.

This threefold sequence of aspiration, devotion, and faith are important. The rising above the problems of the emotions and the physical plane, and being absorbed in the transcendent love of Spirit is only one aspect of love. Divine love must be realized in the context of creation and self-expression. What we learn at transcendent levels must be brought back to mundane levels and integrated into physical living. The work of divine love is to transform that which is imperfect.

Being filled with divine love is a simple process, one which needs integration in our daily meditative practice. Gradually, this love will magnetize our whole personality to the perfection and wholeness of divine creation. It creates the wavelength of healing by aligning the personality with the Higher Self, thereby assisting our access to all spiritual ideals and the seed thoughts of perfection for every aspect of our character and our work.

Once filled with love, we need to focus its power on the specific act of healing. Generally, we would choose a spiritual ideal related to one of the five problem areas described earlier (not the symptoms, but the actual problem). If our problem is lack of self-determination, we would direct our aspiration, devotion, and faith to loving the ideal of approaching life wisely, courageously, and with a strong sense of individuality.

To be the essence of divine love, we must learn to love what Spirit loves and lovingly contribute to the unfoldment of the divine plan in nature and human consciousness. This requires a deep reverence to these ideals of life:

- There is a thread of divine life throughout all of creation.
- The influence of Spirit is everywhere, in everything.
- There is a divine purpose and momentum at work even in the most desperate of situations.
- Love is the natural force behind all perfect human relations.

As you advance in spiritual growth there will be times when you do not need to work on one of the five areas, but want to experience divine perfection. In this experience, focus on a practical use of this connection for creative work, or service to others. ***The power of transcendent love is to be used for healing.***

Having established our love for the spiritual ideal, we then draw the imperfections and hurts of our emotions into the powerful aura of our spiritual love to cleanse them and help them grow towards the spiritual ideal. This process is similar to the technique used in mental housecleaning. The wise teacher within compassionately draws the hurt child to the heart center and, with love and compassion heals the pain.

As we learn to keep our nurturing love focused on the seeds of divine perfection for any specific aspect of life, we activate our spiritual qualities in our regular self-expression. As these ideals come into our conscious life, they automatically expel the negative conditions of fear, gloom, resentment, anger, pettiness, and selfishness. There is no need to vent these feeling, for they are minimal; our real strength lies in remaining ***focused in love*** for the ideal.

One way this method might be used, for example, would be to heal a tendency to engage in angry outbursts. The angry outbursts, of course, are not the problem, and neither are the external conditions that provoke them. The real problem is our lack of self-control and our lack of an appropriate spiritual quality that would replace the anger, such as goodwill.

## Summary

You have the power to Transform that which is imperfect with Divine Love

You must Experience Divine Perfection in your creative work or service to others.

Your personal Will generates motivation. Your mind is designed to evaluate conditions. Your Higher Self sets goals and your Emotions are to enrich your self-expression.

Your Ethics and Goals give focus to your emotional expression.

Self-Control and Self-Restraint are required to control your emotions.

Align yourself with Love.

To Creating Positive Spiritual Qualities. Focus on what you want rather than your problems.

You **Heal** your **Emotions** by focusing on **Divine Love**, using **Aspiration, Devotion** and **Faith**.

**Aspiration** is to lift up your mind & heart,

**Faith** is to aligned yourself with divine love

**Devotion** is to have love for all creation

## A TECHNIQUE FOR HEALING THE EMOTIONS

A brief summary of the steps for healing the emotions are:

1. We begin by entering the meditative state and contacting the Higher Self.
2. We fill our self with divine love, through the practice of aspiration, devotion, and faith. This should include a love of God or Source, a love for the whole of divine creation, and a love for the latent perfection of spiritual life.
3. We focus this divine love, more specifically, by loving a spiritual ideal in our self-expression -- even as Spirit nurtures it through the whole of creation.
4. We draw elements of our own emotional immaturity into the powerful aura of this love of the spiritual ideal for the purpose of healing them. You can use mental role-playing and seed thoughts to facilitate this activity.

## MENTAL HEALTH

The difference between being a "Master" or a "student" is how you respond to the events in your life. It is your internal responses and processing of the events in your life that makes the difference. Rational Emotive Therapy provides some insight as to how to enhance your internal process and responses to internal and external events so your external behavior reflects your highest spiritual nature.

### RATIONAL EMOTIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Self-Esteem must ultimately come from within each person. We best serve people, and children, by providing them with the knowledge and skills for taking control of their inner environment. As we guide them into the realization that they have power over the quality of their own day, it also means that we best serve them by letting go of the power we once may have had over them.

The approach presented here are fairly confrontive in nature. Their basis comes from the theories of Albert Ellis, creator of Rational Emotive Therapy.

The approach of R.E.T. is based on certain premises.

**First**, that events in and of themselves have little if any power over us emotionally.

**Secondly**, that the power lies in the thoughts and beliefs that we have about those events.

**Thirdly**, that emotions will tend to follow thoughts (positive thoughts leading to emotional well-being, "junk-thoughts" leading to emotional pain).

**Fourth**, that a change in thinking will bring a change in feelings.

Rational Emotive Therapy is based on a very simple formula of A plus B causes C. Whereby, A is an event, B is the Thoughts and Beliefs a person has about what happened, and C is the feeling a person creates as the result of B.

### A plus B causes C

R.E.T. is a skill-approach to life. What the person learns is how to recognize thoughts that cause emotional pain, how to recognize beliefs that cause problems, and how to change thinking patterns to a new language that is free of pain.

One of the most important skill is how to recognize a "Fact" from a "Belief." This is not difficult, even for children, but it is a skill which has a great impact on how we feel. If you look behind emotional pain you will see a Belief parading around as if it were a Fact. Living as if Beliefs were Facts can be disillusioning -- if not downright frustrating.

Rational beliefs are beliefs that make sense. They may not be true all the time, or may not be true for everyone; but they can be true for some people some of the time. People don't usually get upset over rational beliefs.

Irrational beliefs are beliefs that do not make sense. They are not true, they are ridicules. People who have irrational beliefs probably get upset a lot, just because of the way things are.

Dr. Maxie Maultsby, a psychiatrist who used and taught R.E.T., identified five main characteristics of rational thinking. When you think rationally:

1. You derive your thoughts primarily from objective fact as opposed to subjective opinion.
2. Your thinking, if acted upon, most likely will result in the preservation of your life and limb.
3. It will help you define your personal life goals most quickly.
4. It will produce in you a minimum of inner conflict and turmoil.
5. And, if you act on it, it will prevent you from getting into undesirable conflict with those with whom you live and associate.

If you follow this kind of rational thinking, you will not embroil yourself in any amount of mechanized responding, over-intellectualizing, or under-emotionalizing. The term rational means: sensible, efficient, unself-defeating. It also includes human emotion, sensitivity and creativity as quite rational pursuits -- as long as you do not take them to such foolish extremes as to sabotage your living and other forms of enjoying.

Probably the most accurate way to examine our belief system is to study our language. This means both the language we say out loud and also what we keep inside our heads. ***What we think inside is called "self-talk."*** It is all the "stuff" that goes on inside our head about other people, and about what happens. It can be very negative and irrational. I can be thought of as "junk-thought."

There are certain words and phrases that are signals that we are being irrational. Let's take a look at some of the language that goes with irrational beliefs.



## DEMANDING

The irrational belief may come out in the form of a demand -- the idea that people, or ourselves, or the world, should be a certain way, or different than it is. Here are some examples:

- I **can't** make a mistake!
- She **should** wear nicer clothes!
- People **have to** be nice to me!
- I **must** get a horse!
- That's not fair!
- If he talks to me, I'll **just die**.

When we make demands, we end up making ourselves miserable, because we generally cannot control other people, or the way the world is. ***Demands are just beliefs parading around pretending to be facts.*** But they are just beliefs, and that is all they are. They are only our ideas of how things should be, and sometimes they have very little to do with the way things really are. It can be very miserable trying to change something that just will not change.

## COPPING - OUT

A second kind of junk-thought is called the Cop-Out. It happens when we refuse to take responsibility for ourselves. Let's look at some examples:

- You** make me so mad!
- She** ruined my whole day
- He** made me do it.
- It's **not my** fault.
- If only my **dad** had more money, I'd have more friends.
- I can't find my screwdriver, **somebody** must have taken it.

This kind of language will keep us miserable for long periods of time. We've convinced ourselves that it isn't our responsibility and that it's somebody else's fault. If we insist on waiting for other people to change, we'll be waiting for a long time, won't we?

## OVER - GENERALIZATION

Over-Generalization happens when we take a little bit of information, make a big deal out of it, and then pretend that it's the whole picture.

- It happens **every** time.
- I **always** get in trouble.
- He **never** has to help.
- Nobody** likes me

Another way of Over-Generalizing is to use a word that labels a person because of one action they took:

Bob slept until noon. Over-Generalization: "He is **lazy**."

Mom insisted we do our homework.

Over-Generalization: "She is **mean**."

Like demands, and cop-outs, over-generalizations are just beliefs, not facts. They do not make sense and will create problems for the person who uses them.

## CATASTROPHIZING

This is what we do when we make a mountain out of a mole hill. When something unpleasant or uncomfortable happens, or might happen, we act as if the world is coming to an end. If something happens we don't like, we think it is awful. When someone is a certain way that we do not like, we think it is just terrible. We act as if we're in the middle of a disaster. Here is the language to be aware of:

If anyone sees me like this, it will be just **awful**!

If I have to get up in front of everybody, it will be **horrible**!

Isn't it just **awful** the way she acts?

I just **can't stand** the thought of missing the next group meeting!

If I forget a line in my speech, it will be **terrible**!

Usually irrational beliefs stomp around and act pretty rowdy -- especially demands that things be different. ***Strong feelings and junk-thoughts usually go along with irrational beliefs.***

But, sometimes irrational beliefs sort of tip toe around and nobody notices them. We may not have any strong feelings and cannot find any junk-thoughts yet we have a pain in the pit of our stomach. The irrational belief is hiding, and it lets the person be perfectly calm, relaxed and smiling while thinking, "When ... happens, everything will be "just fine."

Start paying attention to your "self-talk." Often, we aren't even aware of the junk-thoughts because we're so used to this kind of thinking that we hardly pay attention to it. From this awareness you have the option to change it. The purpose of this class is to develop skills to make these changes.

## TEN IRRATIONAL BELIEFS THAT CAUSE PROBLEMS

1. ***EVERYBODY MUST LOVE ME!***  
The idea that we need love and approval **all the time**. If we don't get enough, we feel awful. We think, "Nobody loves me. I must be awful!" We feel sorry for ourselves ("Poor me!") The most important thing is to "get love." We will do anything for more love.
2. ***I MUST BE GOOD AT EVERYTHING!***  
The idea that we must do everything well to feel good about ourselves. We can't fail. If someone else wins, we feel awful. We say to ourselves, "I lost, so I'm no good. I failed, so I'm lousy. I came in 2nd., how awful!" The fear of failure can keep us from doing a good job.
3. ***SOME PEOPLE ARE BAD: THEY MUST BE PUNISHED!***  
The idea that people who do things that we don't like are bad people. They should be blamed and punished. She's terrible, we should get rid of her. They are evil: they should go to prison.
4. ***THINGS SHOULD BE DIFFERENT!***  
The idea that it is awful when things are different than the way we want them to be. We think "How terrible; things are just awful." We cannot accept things the way they really are. We get upset if we cannot change things to fit our idea of what they should be.
5. ***IT'S YOUR FAULT I FEEL THIS WAY!***  
The idea that somebody else makes us feel the way we do. If we are unhappy, it is because of what someone else said or did. "It is not my fault that I am unhappy." "Other people should change so that I will feel better. It is their job to change. I can't help it."
6. ***I KNOW SOMETHING BAD WILL HAPPEN SOON!***  
The idea that we need to always watch out for things to go wrong. If anything can go wrong it will. I will worry about it so I can be ready for it. I can't relax.
7. ***IT IS EASIER NOT TO EVEN TRY!***  
The idea that we should depend on other people who are stronger than us. The feeling that "I am weak. I can't make my own decisions. Tell me what to think and do. Take care of me." Because we are different from everyone else we need to learn to make our own decisions because we know ourselves best.

8. ***I CAN'T HELP BEING THIS WAY!***

The idea that things happened to us when we were little, and that made us the way we are. "I will probably always be this way. The past is the most important thing. There is no hope that I could change."

9. ***I SHOULD GET UPSET ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS!***

The idea that other people's problems should become our problems. The feeling that we need to change other people. The feeling that it is our job to solve other people's problems. Their problems are now our problems. We think "I'll take care of you. I'll take your problems."

10. ***THERE IS ONLY ONE GOOD WAY TO DO IT!***

The idea that there is only one right way to do things and the other ways are no good. Only one way is best. If we don't do something the best way, it will be awful. We think, "He shouldn't do it that way. His way is all wrong. We have to do it exactly this way. If I don't find the perfect way I'll ruin it."

**HOW DO WE KNOW IF WE HAVE IRRATIONAL BELIEFS?**

There are two keys for finding irrational beliefs.

***The first key is feelings:***

- A. Do you feel upset?
- B. Do you have strong emotions such as: jealousy, frustrated, angry, disgusted, depressed, ashamed, embarrassed, or afraid?

***The second key is language.***

- A. Do you use judgmental language? Notice the words you use. Words like "***should***", "***ought***", "***must***", "***awful***", and "***terrible***" probably mean that you have irrational beliefs.

**Three Steps To Decide Which Beliefs Are Causing Problems.**

- 1. Describe your feeling. "I feel ...."
- 2. Describe what happened before the feeling. Describe as well as you can exactly what happened just before the painful feeling started.
- 3. Describe your thoughts: What did you say to yourself? Be as exact as you can: put down everything you said to yourself in Step 2. Stop and think about what went through your mind.

## USING NEW LANGUAGE

### ***New Language For Showing Preferences:***

I prefer ....	It's okay if ....
I want ....	
I would really like it if ....	I don't like ....
I'd rather ....	I don't care for ....

### ***New Language Of Taking Responsibility***

I am responsible for ....	Other people are not responsible for ....
It's my responsibility to ....	Nobody else is responsible for ....
I'm the one who will need to ...	Other people don't make me feel ....
It is up to me to ....	It is not up to ... to ....
I made myself feel ....	

### ***New Language For Eliminating Generalizations***

... a lot ....

Sometimes it seems like ....

... are behaving like ....

... is acting like ....

### ***New Language For Eliminating Catastrophizing***

I don't like ....

It will be a little embarrassing, but I will survive.

I would feel badly if ....

I hope ... doesn't happen. But if it does, I'll be okay.

## **ELEVEN BELIEF THAT EMPOWER YOU!**

1. ***EVERYBODY DOESN'T HAVE TO LOVE ME.***  
Not everybody has to love me, or even like me. I don't necessarily like everybody I know, so why should everybody else like me? I enjoy being liked and being loved, but if somebody doesn't like me, I am still OKAY. I cannot "make" somebody like me any more than someone can get me to like them. I don't need approval all the time. If someone does not approve of me, I am still OKAY.
2. ***IT IS OKAY TO MAKE MISTAKES***  
It is OKAY to make a mistake. Making mistakes is something we all do, and I am still a fine and worthwhile person when I make mistakes. It is okay for others to make mistakes, too. I will accept mistakes in myself and also mistakes that others make.

3. ***OTHER PEOPLE ARE OKAY AND I AM OKAY.***  
People who do things I don't like are not necessarily bad people. They should not necessarily be punished just because I don't like what they do or did. There is no reason why another person should be the way I want them to be and there is no reason why I should be the way someone else wants me to be. People will be whatever they want to be, and I will be whatever I want to be. I cannot control other people, or change them, they are who they are; we all deserve basic respect and reasonable treatment.
4. ***I DON'T HAVE TO CONTROL THINGS***  
I will survive if things are different than what I want them to be. I can accept things the way they are, accept people the way they are, and accept myself the way I am. There is no reason to get upset if I can't change things to fit into my idea of how they ought to be. There is no reason why I should have to like everything. Even if I don't like it, I can live with it.
5. ***I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY DAY***  
I am responsible for how I feel, and for what I do. Nobody can make me feel anything. If I have a rotten day, I am the one who allowed it to be that way. If I have a great day, I am the one who deserves credit for being positive. It is not the responsibility of other people to change so that I can feel better. I am the one in charge of my life.
6. ***I CAN HANDLE IT WHEN THINGS GO WRONG***  
I don't need to watch out for things to go wrong. Things usually go just fine, and when they don't, I can handle it. I don't have to waste my energy worrying.
7. ***IT IS IMPORTANT TO TRY***  
I can. Even though I may be faced with difficult tasks, it is better to try than to avoid them. Avoiding a task doesn't give me any opportunity for success or joy, but trying does. I might not be able to do everything, but I can do something.
8. ***I AM CAPABLE***  
I don't need someone else to take care of my problems. I am capable. I can take care of myself. I can make decisions for myself. I can think for myself. I don't need to depend on somebody else to take care of me.
9. ***I CAN CHANGE***  
I can change. I don't have to be a certain way because of what has happened in the past. It is silly to think I can't help being the way I am. Of course I can.

## 10. ***OTHER PEOPLE ARE CAPABLE***

I can't solve other people's problems for them. I don't have to take on other people's problems as if they were my own. I don't need to change other people, or fix up their lives. They are capable and can care for themselves, and can solve their own problems. I can care and be of some help, but I can not do everything for them.

## 11. ***I CAN BE FLEXIBLE***

There is more than one way to do something. More than one person has good ideas that will work. There is no one and only "best" way. Everyone has ideas that are worthwhile. Some may make more sense to me than others, but everyone's ideas are worthwhile, and everyone has something worthwhile to contribute.

## **FEELINGS**

Since a major part of R.E.T is "C" the feeling we create about an event based on our thoughts and beliefs it might be helpful to get acquainted with the names of some feelings. While this list isn't complete it might help you to identify the emotions you are now aware of.

### **FEELINGS LIST**

abandoned	annoyed	blissful	childish
abrupt	antagonistic	blue	clownish
absurd	antsy	blustery	cold
accepted	anxious	bold	comfortable
adequate	apathetic	bored	compelled
adventurous	appalled	brilliant	competent
affected	apprehensive	bubbly	complying
afraid	ashamed	bugged	concerned
aggravated	assertive	bullied	confident
aggressive	at peace	burned out	confined
agitated	awed	burned up	congenial
agonized	awkward	calm	constructive
agreeing	baffled	captivated	contempt
alive	bashful	cared for	content
alone	beautiful	carefree	cool
aloof	belligerent	caring	cooperative
ambitious	bereaved	cautious	cowardly
ambivalent	better	cheated	crazy
angry	bewildered	cheered	creative
animosity	bitter	cherished	cruel

## FEELING LIST

curt	empathetic	graceful	inferior
daring	empty	grateful	inflamed
defeated	enchanted	great	ingenious
defensive	encouraged	gregarious	insignificant
defiant	energized	grim	intelligent
delighted	enthusiastic	grouchy	intimidated
demeaned	envious	grumpy	intolerant
demoralized	evil	guilty	irate
dependent	exasperated	gullible	irrational
depressed	excited	gutsy	irritated
desire	exhausted	had	jealous
despair	exhilarated	happy	jolly
despondent	exploited	hate	jovial
determined	explosive	healthy	joyful
disagreeing	failure	helpful	jubilant
disappointed	fascinated	helpless	judgmental
disconcerted	fat	heroic	jumpy
discontent	fear	hesitant	justifying
discounted	feisty	high	kind
discouraged	feminine	hopeful	kinky
disgruntled	flighty	hopeless	knock down
disgusted	flustered	horny	lazy
disorganized	foiled	hostile	left out
displeased	foolish	humble	let down
distracted	forgiving	humiliated	lethargic
distressed	forlorn	hungry	levity
disturbed	free	hurt	light hearted
dopey	frightened	hyper	listless
down	frivolous	ill tempered	lonely
drained	frustrated	impatient	loved
dull	fulfilled	important	lovely
dumb	furious	inadequate	loving
eager	futile	incapable	low
ecstatic	generalizing	incompetent	loyal
elated	glad	independent	lucky
embarrassed	glorious	indifferent	mad
emotional	goofy	indignant	merciless



## FEELING LIST

minimizing	rejected	stupid	unlucky
miserable	relieved	successful	unmasked
natural	reluctant	suffering	unsure
nervous	remorse	superior	unworthy
numb	resentful	surprised	upset
obligated	resentment	surrender	uptight
overcome	resigned	suspicious	used
overjoyed	respectable	sympathy	useless
overwhelmed	revengeful	tacky	vengeful
pain	robbed	talented	verbosity
peaceful	satisfied	teed of	warm
peppy	secure	thwarted	wasted
pious	seething	tired	weak
pity	self-pity	tolerant	weary
playful	selfish	tormented	wishy-washy
pleased	shifting	touchable	with it
poised	short	tough	withdrawn
possessive	shy	tranquil	witty
proud	sick	trapped	wonderful
provoked	silence	triumphant	worried
punishing	smoldering	turbulent	worthless
pushed	snappy	ugly	worthy
put out	sore	unattached	wrathful
rage	spite	uncomfortable	wrong
rational	stormy	understood	yearning
rationalizing	stressed out	uneasy	youthful
rebellious	stubborn	unfulfilled	zany
refreshed	stuck in	unhappy	
regret	stunned	unloved	

## MAKING CHANGES

Changing our thoughts and feeling can help us avoid hurt. Basically the process to make changes is to find our irrational thoughts and then change them to rational thoughts that make sense. Then, they will no longer cause any problems. This can be accomplished using a seven step procedure:

1. Describe the feeling , "C";
2. Describe what happened, "A";
3. Describe thoughts and self-talk, "B";
4. Identify Irrational Beliefs;
5. List Rational Beliefs and rational self-talk.
6. Start thinking and using what you discovered in Step 5.
7. Use the Active Meditation Techniques to create new Beliefs and Behavior

The change in feelings will come from changes we make in our thinking. When our thoughts are more positive, so will our emotions. **Changing is exciting. We may not be able to do much to change the whole world, but we can do a lot to change our map of the world.**

**SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IV**  
**AREA 6**  
**INVOKING WISDOM**

Jnana Yoga -- The Path of Knowledge and Intellect  
Bhakti Yoga -- The Path of Love and Devotion  
Karma Yoga -- The Path of Action and Selfless Service  
Raja Yoga -- The Path of Discipline and Meditation  
Laya Yoga -- The Path of Fusion  
Kundalini Yoga -- The Path of Primal Force  
Integral Yoga -- Synthesis of all Yogic Systems

These are some of the pathways to Oneness with Spirit. Yoga philosophy relates to one's perception of life based on personality. Each person follows a path of Yoga based on his or her personality traits. The path may follow any number of teachings or religious points of view, yet it is still following a basic Yoga philosophy.

There is a belief that we need to master one path rather than pursuing many paths at once. An individual frequently does need to concentrate on one specific approach to God and the Higher Self, especially in the beginning. Nevertheless, it is important to know the need for balance in our approach to God and the Higher Self.

Some modern yogic spiritual teachers emphasize the need for advanced yoga practitioners to develop integral yoga. To create a balance within self of all the disciplines of yoga philosophy.

Most Westerners choose either the path of faith or devotion when first embarking on the spiritual quest. While unshakable love for the divine and a solid faith in the benevolence of Spirit are quite necessary they limit a person to those facets of Spirit activate by love or faith alone. Faith is limited without wisdom and divine will to take action and live the divine principles. We must master each of the paths to be fully in harmony with our spiritual nature.

Being immortal, the Higher Self has acquired vast amount of talents, powers, and knowledge from many dimension throughout its long existence. Wisdom is more than ideas, it also refers to knowing the meaning of those ideas and having the power to act creatively with them. The Higher Self as a divine creation also has access to the full wisdom and force of divine patterns of creation.

When the mind is properly trained it has the potential to become a temple of wisdom, in which the power of the Higher Self is used to purify the experiences of daily life.

To develop wisdom we need to learn discernment, so we can embrace the ideals of the Higher Self, by training the mind to reach out and expand beyond mind. We also need to learn to work with knowledge, so we can translate the wisdom of the Higher Self into practical self-expression, by training the mind to work practically. In order to learn to work abstractly, we must train the mind in certain intuitive skills, so we can interact with the divine archetypes of the Higher Self. Lastly, to learn to work with the power of thought, so we can tap the power of archetypal life, we must train the mind to create principles.

The mind has been described by many teachers as being critical, skeptical, materialistic, profane, and prejudiced. Yet this reputation represents emotionally-oriented people trying to use an undeveloped mind. Wisdom is the accumulative knowledge, insight, and power to act of the Higher Self. And requires a trained and developed mind to tap this resource for use in our daily lives.

### **SOURCE OF WISDOM**

Meditation can illuminate the pathways between the intelligence of the personality and the wisdom of the Higher Self. This illumination generally builds over a period of repetitive practice, as we focus our need to know and solicit the guidance of the Higher Self. Here are some basic points:

1. Everyone is provided with an enormous inner wisdom and the capacity to acquire greater understanding of life.
2. This wisdom is available to anyone who develops an effective relationship with the Higher Self. In such a relationship, the physical body is attuned to the Higher Self's ideal of actions, the emotions reflect the Higher Self's capacity to express love, and the mind is aligned to the Higher Self's resources of wisdom.
3. The nature of the wisdom of the Higher Self is abstract. It defines principles, rather than the application of these principles. The personality grounds wisdom in its conduct of daily living as it learns to formulate concrete applications for the abstract principles of the Higher Self.
4. The abstract ideas or principles of the wisdom of the Higher Self have three aspects -- power, meaning, and pattern. We must train the mind to work with power, meaning, and patterns of ideas, rather than its usual preoccupation with the form of ideas.

5. Access to the wisdom of the Higher Self is acquired by learning and practicing the skills of contacting and using knowledge and intelligence. The pathway to the wisdom of the Higher Self can only be illuminated through our own efforts. The most reliable source of guidance is our own inner wisdom.

The bridge which links us with the wisdom of the Higher Self is built in five stages:

1. By cultivating a love of truth.
2. By training our mind to become responsive to wisdom and truth.
3. By learning to work intelligently with symbolic and abstract thought.
4. By focusing the intention to apply wisdom in the pursuit of enlightened living.
5. By developing the habit of exploring the higher realms of life.

### **THE LOVE OF TRUTH**

The love of truth is a dynamic concept. As our love of truth grows, our capacity to invoke inspiration, penetrate self-deception, and comprehend the ideals of the Higher Self also grows. Like wisdom, truth is multidimensional. We must consider the meaning, design, purpose, and universality of truth as well as its appearance and application to us. The concepts of wisdom and truth which stem from divine archetypes of life create harmony with archetypal life.

The love of truth consists of three elements. Devotion to the divine origin of truth and wisdom. Respect for truth and wisdom as the basis for conducting life -- individually and collectively. The effort to honor truth and wisdom, and revise our thoughts, feelings, and behavior so they become consistent with the divine archetypes of life. The axiom: "Each truth is but a half-truth" provides the student with humbleness. Each truth is truth from a certain point of understanding and each higher truth incorporates all the lower truths.

In our love of truth we begin to discover that some of the attitudes and beliefs we have cherished at the personality level are nothing but prejudices, attachments and self-deceptions. The love of truth provides the motivation to change what no longer serves as your truth.

The mind is the primary entry point by which the wisdom and creative inspiration of the Higher Self enters the personality. To bridge to the Higher Self, we must develop some basic skills to improve the quality of the mind. These are some of the skills needed:

Concentration	Discernment	Discrimination
Logic	Analysis	Objectivity
Induction	Deduction	Planning
Evaluation	Organization	Creativity
Contemplation	Intuition	Integrity
Common sense	Adaptability	Harmony
Detachment	Association	Synthesis

While all these skills can be developed for the use of the personality alone, they need at least some mastery to become responsive to our inner wisdom. Educating the mind is a life long project of using the mind to actively pursue insights about all aspects of life and what is beyond life.

### **SYMBOLIC AND ABSTRACT THOUGHT**

The world of ideas, events, and ourselves are symbols of wisdom and truth. These symbols are not wisdom and truth themselves, but have the potential to embody the richness and force of archetypal life. A symbol is any concrete form which reveals the abstract essence from which it has derived. The symbol itself has no power, significance, or intelligence of the abstract thought it represents. We need to go beyond the symbol itself and contact the abstract reality it represents.

Working with symbols will help us learn that the mind is not limited to concrete intellectual analysis alone; it is capable of handling creative inspiration, abstractions, and insight. It will introduce us to a refined world of subtle qualities, meaning, and purpose along with greatly stimulating the power of our thinking.

It is important to keep in mind that symbols can lead us to abstract thoughts and feeling. An abstract feeling would be the essence of a particular emotion. The essence of expressing tolerance and forgiveness are the abstract quality of goodwill. It is experienced as a broad pervasive feeling of love and respect for others. An abstract thought is the archetypal force which is the essence of a particular idea. It is experienced as direct understanding of the significance of an idea and how it relates to other ideas.

Here is an example. If I am unhappy in my life, but manage to tap the quality of joy in meditation, I would be touching an abstract feeling. If I also understood why I was unhappy -- I expected others to make me happy instead of accepting responsibility for my happiness -- this would be an abstract thought.

Abstract feelings are useful to heal and enrich the emotions, expanding our expression of divine love. Abstract thought provides an understanding to aspects of daily life. It can also embrace an entire range of possibilities and application while remaining whole.

When abstract thinking has been mastered we are able to deal directly with archetypal forces of divine mind. We inspect the fundamental principles and patterns which serve as the blueprint for all creativity, healing, and self-improvement. We can now seek out creative inspiration rather than wait for it to arrive. This is one of the great benefits of meditation.

## **INTENTION**

Within every archetypal ideal there is a strong impulse to act on the intelligence and meaning contained within it. We must become responsive to the will of the ideal by cultivating the intention to apply wisdom in enlightened living.

The will to the divine life is a powerful force which seeks to activate all enlightened elements of consciousness. This will, provides the personal determination to be the right person doing the right thing at all times. We can then use this force of will in meditation to penetrate the elements of ignorance, self-deception, and selfishness still in the character of the personality, while simultaneously strengthening the elements of intelligence, maturity, and discipline which can clear them away.

Understanding must be converted into action before it becomes wisdom. The intention to apply wisdom to the challenges of enlightened living creates a pathway for the light of wisdom to enter into our conscious thoughts, feelings, and behavior. The wisdom and light of the Higher Self has the power to shine through every facet of our self-expression. But it requires us to formulate the intention to take an active part in applying wisdom.

## **EXPLORING THE HIGHER REALMS**

Archetypal ideas stimulate our curiosity to explore the higher realms of mind and spirit. To reach out beyond the boundary of our thoughts and discover new dimensions. The focus of ordinary consciousness serves a

useful purpose in helping us remain attentive to our duties and obligations. To connect to the wisdom of the Higher Self it is necessary to teach oneself to break free from the limitations of ordinary consciousness and periodically explore the higher realms.

There are three fundamental attributes to cultivate in teaching oneself to explore the higher realms of consciousness:

1. Broad-mindedness. Recognizing and appreciating that a single aspect of wisdom can give rise to thousands of different expressions. We foster a more universal attitude towards life, thinking in terms of the planet and universe as a whole, as well as our personal needs.
2. Speculation. We constantly review situations and explore the possibility of a more enlightened way of managing problems, creating opportunities, and fulfilling responsibilities.
3. Innovativeness. In dealing with life circumstances and challenges, we strive to look for new ways of handling them. Rather than relying on past patterns, we invoke the guidance of inner wisdom to help us in our thinking.

While the realms of higher consciousness are vast my suggestion is to explore and merge with those higher realms of consciousness that are a part of your Divine Essence. Your Highest Spiritual Being refers to that next level of consciousness that your Spiritual Being desires to merge with. Your Spiritual Consciousness begins with your Higher Self and continues in a spectrum of consciousness to the ALL. You can connect with that part of your Highest Spiritual Being that is a part of the Angelic Realm, a part of the Plane of Gold and Silver, a part of the Void, and, an aspect of the ALL.

Each of these Higher Vibrations are an integral part of your Divine Spectrum of Consciousness. When you anchor these higher vibrations of your Spiritual Being into your physical body, emotions and mind your vibration is raised to a higher level. So, the easiest way to raise your vibration level is to bring in a higher consciousness level of your Divine Essence into your physical body.

### **INVOKING WISDOM**

While this technique begins with establishing contact with the Higher Self, it is designed to be used at light meditative levels as well as deeper



levels. As such, it can be conveniently used whenever we have the need for wisdom--at work, while reading, while reflecting on a problem, and so on. **It should not be limited to formal meditation.**

The technique is designed to be flexible and versatile. There are many ways in which the Higher Self can communicate with us -- through mental impression, images, a sense of rightness or wrongness, or specific words and thoughts. We should be flexible enough to perceive wisdom in whatever form it arrives.

After contacting the Higher Self, the next step is to take a moment to define our need for wisdom. We need to take the initiative with our Higher Self to define the area we wish to receive guidance to help us act more wisely in a specific way. This could be a problem we need to solve, an area of confusion, an opportunity we want to evaluate, an aspect of character we want to review, a relationship we want to improve, a responsibility we want to better execute, or something of this nature.

Having defined this need to know and given focus to our search, we can then select the method of contacting the Higher Self which will best suit our purpose. There is an extensive menu to choose from:

1. **Invoking The Ideal Solution.** We know that the ideal way of handling this situation already exists as a pattern or principle within the Higher Self. All we need to do is transfer this wisdom into our conscious awareness. In our imagination, we can visit the vast library of information and investigate the answers it all ready contains. Or, we might assume this ideal resolution has already worked itself out in physical manifestation. By reviewing what has already occurred from the perspective of the Higher Self, we are able to obtain valuable insights and clues as to how best to proceed.
2. **Discerning Purpose And Principles.** An excellent way to transcend the limits of normal thinking is to seek to discern the purpose and principles at work in the subject of our inquiry. This is accomplished by looking at the situation from the perspective of the Higher Self, and how it views the purpose and principles being served. We can ask: What forces are involved in this situation? What is their origin and intention? What wisdom is being taught? Is it in harmony with universal principles? What is the best way to fulfill the purpose being served?
3. **Role Playing.** We can imagine we are an experienced investigative reporter seeking to discover the truth behind some phenomenon or aspect of life. Cast in this role, or any other similar role, we can reflect on the why, how, when, where, and who of the object of our inquiry.

We seek this information from the vast resources of the wisdom of the Higher Self. Role playing is an excellent way to achieve a greater measure of impersonality and objectivity in our efforts to invoke wisdom.

4. **Working With Symbols.** It can be quite useful to invoke a symbol for our object of inquiry from the Higher Self, and then ponder on the meaning, insight, and force which the symbol represents. This is done by dwelling briefly on the expectation that the Higher Self will subtly suggest to us an appropriate symbol. We shift our attention from our need to being receptive, adopting a listening attitude, the invocation is answered and the symbol comes into focus. There are a great many esoteric symbols which can provide a great deal of insight into the wisdom of the Higher Self as they are contemplated and examined. Nevertheless, always remember the reason for invoking a symbol is to go beyond the form and tap the abstract essence it represents.
5. **Personifying Our Inner Wisdom.** Personification is a marvelous way to translate abstract patterns of wisdom into concrete images the subconscious mind can relate to. It is of utmost importance that the personification we create is being guided and directed by our Higher Self, thereby leading us into greater rapport with its wisdom. Without this strong dedication to truth, a personification can easily be taken over by our wishes and fantasies.

In personifying our inner wisdom, the sage or teacher is the most convenient image to use as a guide and teacher of the proper perspective regarding our subject of inquiry. It is not necessary to see this image clearly -- we are not trying to obtain clear vision. The emphasis should be placed on looking at life from the perspective of this wise teacher. Another useful personification is to think of our inner wisdom as a committee of experts seated at a round table. These experts are there to answer our questions concerning the object of our inquiry.

6. **Working With Divine Archetypes.** The archetypes are the patterns of wisdom and intelligence in the mind of God. They contain the insights, meaning, intelligence, and power from which genuine creative work draws its strength. To become a wise parent it can be helpful to work directly with the archetypes for parenting and growth. To become truly wise in any field of human endeavor, it is important to become familiar with the archetypes which govern it. The process is quite easy. Taking the object of our inquiry, we reflect on the patterns of divine intelligence which govern it and the basic design by which it operates.

While pondering on these patterns, we invoke the appropriate archetypal force, knowing that our invocation is being answered. We then communicate with this pure force of life. It may require some imagination and some experience to become comfortable with abstract patterns of intelligence. Gradually you will begin to recognize the distinct qualities of the various archetypal forces of life. Using symbols to represent the various archetypes may help this process in the beginning.

Each meditative exercise in working with the wisdom of the Higher Self should conclude by reviewing the insight gained, examining its larger implications, and then determining its practical application in our life.

### **COMMON SENSE**

There will always be a certain measure of doubt as to whether we are actually contacting our inner wisdom -- or just playacting with our subconscious. A little skepticism helps prevent gullibility. The Higher Self is just as interested in these meditative efforts as the personality is, and it will supervise your exercises.

Under no circumstances should we assume that we are duty bound to accept without reservation all input arising from these exercises. We have an obligation to review advice and guidance, from whatever source, before we act upon it. If the insights we receive mesh with our values, principles, and sense of duty, it is reasonable to trust them. If they do not, we should be highly skeptical of them. By using simple common sense and good-judgment, we can avoid problems which may arise -- and far more quickly develop useful rapport with the wisdom of the Higher Self.

#### **A Brief Summary**

- 1) Wisdom includes all of your accumulative knowledge and insight, and your power to act in accordance with your Higher Self.
- 2) Intelligence is the providence of personality, wisdom resides within the Higher Self.
- 3) You are your most reliable source of wisdom.
- 4) The Higher Self is abstract using power, meaning and patterns of ideas.
- 5) Love of truth cultivates wisdom. The mind needs to be trained to be responsive to wisdom and truth.
- 6) Wisdom is expressed thousands of different ways, explore possibilities, be innovative in dealing with life's challenges.

- 7) The easiest way to raise your vibration level is to bring in a higher consciousness level of your Divine Essence into your physical body.

### **A TECHNIQUE FOR INVOKING WISDOM**

The technique for invoking the wisdom of the Higher Self can be summarized as follows:

1. We begin by entering a meditative state and contacting the Higher Self.
2. We define our need to know, giving focus to our invocation of wisdom.
3. We choose the appropriate method for making contact with the wisdom of the Higher Self, selecting from the various skills of meditation. The choices include: invoking for ideal solutions, discerning purpose and principles, role playing, working with symbols, personification, and working with divine archetypes. Using whichever method we select, we then investigate the topic we have in mind.
4. We conclude by reviewing the insights we have gained and build the intention to apply them to life, thereby touching the power to act wisely.

## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IV

### AREA 7

#### SOLVING PROBLEMS

Meditation is meant to be a bridge between the Higher Self and the personality. To bring forth a higher resource into the life of the personality. Active Meditation, therefore, puts its emphasis on reducing stress by solving our problems and difficulties. In this way, it applies the basic theme of the greater taking care of the lesser. Rather than the personality seeking to become absorbed in the life of the Higher Self. The Higher Self becomes absorbed in the life of the personality to correct the problems at hand. It becomes heaven on earth.

Most people view problems as troublesome -- something to avoid at all cost. Problems seem to be a natural phenomenon of life. While there is no need to deliberately create problems, it is helpful to realize that many of our problems do serve worthwhile purposes. In fact, there is often a great deal of potential growth in problems. A moment of crisis may be a turning point in our life, providing an opportunity for growth. **Through problems we develop spiritual character.**

The key lies in how we respond to the problem. If we habitually respond by avoidance of the situation, we will be completely unprepared to seize the opportunity of the turning point. If we automatically respond by attacking the problem in the same mode which led to it in the first place, but more angrily and aggressively than before, the turning point will become so painful--or exhausting -- that we cannot capitalize on it.

Yet, if we continually respond by seeking out the wise counsel and enlightened perspective of the Higher Self, we will be able to see clearly the higher truths being learned, the opportunities presented to us, and a reasonable solution to the problem.

This can be done by posing a series of questions the Higher Self can answer. These questions should examine why and how the problem has developed, what we have contributed to it, the higher truths we can learn from it, the deeper issues behind the outer symptom, and the most effective way to resolve it.

Some people believe they should merely contact the wisdom of the Higher Self and let it guide them wherever it will. They reason, the personality knows so little and the Higher Self knows so much, why should the personality impose limits on the capacity of the Higher Self to guide us? This attitude is not in harmony with the way communication

between the Higher Self and the personality occurs. It is the responsibility of the personality to initiate the request for assistance from the Higher Self -- and to skillfully direct the guidance it receives. This is most successfully done by asking penetrating questions which will invoke a response.

All communication is a two way flow of information to insure the correct understanding of the information by both parties. We ask a friend for their input about a situation we're dealing with. Our friend now knows what the topic of the conversation is about, and she or he can respond to our question. We listen to their response and ask for clarification if it is needed. Both parties are active listening, insuring what they said was correctly understood by the other person. This is communication, and it works the same way between the Higher Self and our personality.

The Higher Self is always striving to help the personality increase its responsibility and accountability for its actions. It will provide us with useful guidance and insight -- but it still expects us to take this help and integrate it into our daily living. We can always turn to the Higher Self to strengthen our courage and determination, but it is up to us to confront our issues and challenges. This is how we become a competent instrument of the wisdom, love, and power of the Higher Self.

There are three basic classifications of problems which people deal with:

1. Personal problems.
2. Career problems.
3. Problems rising from creative activity.

### **PERSONAL PROBLEMS**

The greatest difficulty in managing personal problems is that we are so intimately involved with them. As a result it is a challenge to achieve a meaningful level of detachment and view the situation objectively. All too often, we color the questions we ask with our wishes and expectations, so the answers will please and satisfy us.

Generally, we are far more aware of the symptoms of the problem and our reactions to them -- as well as our defenses against them -- than we are of the genuine underlying issue. The questions we pose to the Higher Self must therefore be designed so as to help us penetrate beyond our self-deception and arrive at the true issue we must confront. These are some of the basic question to consider:

### **What are the patterns and trends which have led to this problem?**

What have we done to contribute to the problem -- and how we perhaps aggravated it. Many of our personal problems occur because we have been negligent in attending to duties, commitments, assignments, and obligations. If we have a problem of loneliness, we ought to examine what efforts we have lately made to make friends -- and how we have treated the friends we already have.

### **What Is The Psychological Climate In Which This Problem Arose?**

Many of our problems are more severe because of the context in which they were generated. A simple disagreement between two people may take on complex overtones if they happen to be members of the same family. Some of our problems may be affected by psychic influences from mass consciousness -- the fear of economic hard times, for example. Examining the climate in which the problem arises can therefore provide us with many clues for managing it more intelligently.

### **What Is The Real Work To Be Done In Solving This Problem?**

It is easy to become absorbed in the minor details of a problem and fail to recognize the larger issues involved. In such a case, we need to stand back and take a larger perspective, examining the real work to be done. The parent who is constantly at odds with his or her children may need to devote less time harping on the lack of respect of children for parents, and more attention to learning the principles of good parenting. As we broaden our perspective on the real dimensions of our problems, we are able to see more clearly the changes to be made.

### **What Is The Real Question Posed By This Problem?**

We came to earth in order to: learn and serve, be helpful in the world, acquire greater skill and expertise, and honor our spiritual potential. If we, at the personality level, tend to view all work as an imposition, all conflict as harassment, all offers of cooperation as intrusions, and all criticism as an attack on our character, then it will be impossible to arrive at any enlightened solutions to the problems of our life. The Higher Self will be unable to help us reduce stress, because much of what we are defining as stress is an opportunity! It is therefore important to start viewing our problems as opportunities for success rather than failure.

A problem seen only as an obstacle may well be unsolvable. But, if we view it as an opportunity for growth, we can usually make it precisely that very quickly.

### **What Is The Best Possible Solution?**

The one factor which prolongs and aggravates most problems is the unintelligent definition of what a solution to the problem will be. In most cases, the solution is no solution at all -- just the desire to survive, avoid conflict, and wait for better times. As a result, we retreat into defensiveness -- instead of knowing that we have options to take to improve the situation. Sometimes, we go a step beyond defensiveness and act upon a desire for vengeance or punishment, thereby introducing elements which will intensify the problem, not resolve it.

It must be understood that some people do not actually want to solve their problems. Some of these people are addicted to the martyr complex they have carefully built up; others delight in revenge and would not consider the resolution of their problems as a moment of triumph, as they have delight in suffering or their justification for continued anger. As these tendencies can at times be very subtle, it is therefore quite important to examine our motives regarding our problems.

By taking the time meditatively to determine what the ideal solution to our problems will be, we orient our thoughts and attitudes towards resolving it, not prolonging it. Most personal problems involve other people. If we consider only what is best for us, we are severely limiting our choices and probably reducing our chances of discovering what truly is the best solution.

### **What New Qualities, Forces, And Talents Do We Need To Cultivate In Order To Resolve This Difficulty?**

The object of meditation on our problems is not to convince us that everyone else is wrong and we are right. Self-righteousness can easily trap a person in his or her problems. The reason for meditation on difficulties is to devise enlightened ways of resolving them. Generally, this involves developing new qualities, forces, and talents which we can then apply to the situation at hand. Many times, it may also involve learning to stop acting in ways that irritate the problem. Often, the new skill to be learned is quite obvious -- greater patience, or more courage. But sometimes it is more subtle, involving a greater appreciation of the ways other people view these circumstances or the capacity to remain firm in our convictions without seeming obstinate, or pushy to others.

### **How Best Can We Integrate These New Qualities, Forces, And Talents Into Our Self-Expression?**

It is naive to think we can create new qualities like patience on the outer surface of our character, thereby allowing the old traits of intolerance and criticism to reside within. Superficial changes in self-expression soon wears thin. To be effective, these new forces, talents, and qualities must be permanently anchored into the foundation of our character.



If our problem is rudeness, for example, it will be necessary to practice politeness and respect for others in all our dealings with others. In this way, the new skill becomes a permanent part of our character.

## **CAREER PROBLEMS**

Many of the problems we encounter in the work place are merely extension of personal problems, and need to be handled as such. Criticism is criticism, whether we happen to be with friends or at the office. But many problems from the work place are distinct from personal problems. These are often problems that affect the whole business or activity, and must be solved with this in mind. As a result, the kind of questions we direct to the Higher Self, in order to better understand and solve the problem, will be somewhat different. These are some of the basic questions to consider:

**What Mental Framework Are We Using To Define And Solve This Problem?** Many specialist in business view problems with a very narrow mind set. Accountants tend to view problems in terms of financial -- not in terms of what is best for customer, employees, or productivity. Such mental sets are extremely common -- and many problems are created because a person working in one mental set is unable to communicate effectively with someone using a different one. It is helpful to know the mental sets that are being used to define the problem, and that any mental set can be limiting.

We need to accept responsibility to initiate remedial action in areas we have responsibility. And, to know where we have no responsibility--and no business. So, it can be quite enlightening to examine the scope of responsibility we actually do have in any situation. This responsibility can be of two kinds. The first would be the specific duties spelled out by the job we hold. The second is the obligation we have to the welfare and growth of the entire enterprise we are a part of. It is this latter responsibility which is so often forgotten in the work place. People are often more interested in fostering competition than in cooperating and contributing to the betterment of the company or agency.

**In What Kind Of Environment Has This Problem Developed?**

Long-standing morale problems, depressed market conditions, bad publicity about product or service offered, or serious competition can affect our ability to work out simple a solution to problems. Without considering these external forces can make it all but impossible to achieve success.

### **What Trends Are Inherent In This Problem?**

Has this problem been addressed in the past and how was it dealt with. Sometimes, this examination of trends will indicate that no action is required; it is best to let the problem die of its own accord. At other times, however, it will indicate that the trends are far more serious than the problem itself has suggested, and swift action is required before conditions worsen. It is also useful to keep in mind that many trends are cyclical in nature and need to be treated accordingly.

### **What Is The Real Problem To Be Solved?**

It is important to separate the real difficulty from its symptoms. One of the best ways to separate the real issue from the symptoms is to consider how the problem at hand is affecting the whole enterprise and its capacity to fulfill its purpose. By putting the problem in the context of the purpose of the enterprise as a whole, it is often relatively simple to see the larger dimensions involved -- and the solution to implement.

### **Have we been asking the right question?**

Sometimes problems in the work-place arise because we have made unrealistic assumptions or are working towards false goals. Many supervisors, for example, may believe they can mold the people working for them into their own personal style. In most cases, this unrealistic assumption will create rebellion from the employees. Asking, "Why are employees so disloyal," is the wrong question. He should be asking, "What attitudes of mine have been causing my employees to rebel against me?"

### **What Practical Steps Can Be Taken To Solve This Problem?**

The cardinal rule of working on problem of the work place is to tailor solutions to factors under our control. As we examine the practical steps to be taken, we need to consider what can be done within the sphere of authority we have--or how to obtain the power to implement these steps if we do not already have it. Other factors which will be involved in implementing the solution should also be considered -- the time it will take, the cost, and the chances of success.

## **PROBLEMS ARISING FROM CREATIVE ACTIVITY**

The problems which arise from creative activity are by-products of our own innovative work. While usually not as threatening as the other two types of problems, they still require skills to resolve them.

Creative activity includes a wide variety of inspired self-expression -- from the creation of a spiritual atmosphere for our family life to a new understanding of the esoteric factors of illness, or a new breakthrough in

science or technology. It includes the conventional fields of creativity, but is not limited to them. The challenge of translating a good idea into practical reality includes problems such as difficulty in developing creative ideas, overcoming obstacles in refining and perfecting these ideas, and facing opposition from others who are jealous of our creation or feel threatened by what we are producing. The types of questions best suited for these types of problems include:

### **What Is The Purpose Of This Creative Activity?**

Creative work has to fulfill a need of the people who benefit from the end result. Such shortsightedness by the initiator limits the creative endeavor and diminishes the impact it will have.

### **What Effect Do We Seek To Create?**

The creator is responsible for the effects he or she produces. Many people are attracted to creative pursuits by the thrill they get from producing something new from their own imagination. However, many problems can arise if we lack the sense of responsibility to make sure that what we create will produce favorable effects.

### **What Resources Of Time, Talent, Raw Material, And Opportunity Are We Able To Draw On?**

An excellent inspiration becomes a creative masterpiece when it has been translated from the abstract into the concrete. The inability to coordinate time, talent, raw materials, and opportunity has frustrated many potentially creative people. This frustration can only be reduced by examining the implications of this particular question. Some people are creative channels through which their ideas are passed on to others who have the resources to complete the task. If an idea of yours would require you to get several degrees in fields that are of no interest to you, most likely it is for someone else you know to carry it out. You are only a messenger of the idea.

### **What Is The Psychological Climate In Which We Are Seeking To Be Creative?**

What is your psychological state? Elements of fear, fatigue, resentment, self-doubt, and self-criticism can sabotage creative endeavors. Remember, if these elements are discovered, they can be removed in meditation by using the appropriate mental housecleaning techniques before we launch into our creative endeavors. The psychological climate around us is very important. If friends and family members are antagonistic or jealous of our work, it can disrupt the creative process at the psychic level. The best way to manage these difficulties, if they arise, is to increase our faith in our own skills and inspiration, and to renew our commitment to serving the purpose of our creative endeavors.

**How Can We Best Honor The Creative Forces We Are Working With?** Creative forces in alignment with Spirit will grow in scope, quality, and their value to humanity. Creative people should use meditation to review the effectiveness of their approach to creativity on a regular basis. This would be examining their alignment with Spirit, the strength of their faith in the work they are doing, and the skills and talents they possess. It should also include periodic housecleaning, as well as reenergizing the ideas and posture they try to maintain during the creative process -- dedication to excellence, a sense of responsibility, and responsiveness to the best ideas and ideals within them.

## **SOLVING PROBLEMS**

This question and answer approach to problem solving is used by many people seeking to reflect on the meaning of the difficulties he or she faces. But, it is especially powerful when used as a meditative exercise, because meditation is the natural communication between the Higher Self and the personality. At a meditative level, we are better able to know that our problems are multidimensional in structure and implication, just as we are a multidimensional being. Some problems need resolving subconsciously and unconsciously as well as consciously, and this can be done in meditation.

It is always important to keep in mind that when we ask questions at a meditative level, we receive more than mere answers. We receive an understanding of why these answers will resolve the problem, and we receive the power to implement the solution. It is this dynamic aspect of problem solving which distinguishes Active Meditation from ordinary thinking and reflection.

The meditative process for solving problems begins, as always, by establishing contact with the Higher Self. After contact, take a few moments to dwell on the capacity of the Higher Self to understand and solve our problems. This can be done by meditating on the power behind various seed thoughts, such as "discovery of inner resources," "the perfect strength and wisdom of the Higher Self," and "the power of a creative approach to life."

Once we are properly receptive to the Higher Self, we can then ask the actual questions. The first step is to define the problem, its preceding conditions, the climate in which we must deal with it, and the real problem behind the symptoms. Two of the skills of meditation can assist in this regard:

**Personification.** We can personify the Higher Self as a wise person with whom we can converse and receive answers to the questions we have in our mind. Or, we can consult with a committee of experts who can

examine the problem from their various perspectives. This does require being focused on solving the problem at hand, and not being swept away by a fantasy about the personification or believe that the personification will solve our problems for us.

**Role-Playing.** There are several ways this meditative skill can be used in defining the problem. If other people are involved, we can meditatively play their roles in the situation, thereby gaining insight into their motives, their attitudes, and what will be best for them. We can use role-playing to converse with a specific aspect of our personality which can help us solve this problem. If self-doubt is sabotaging you, you can role play the "inner critic" to better understand what is prompting this doubt - and then heal it.

It may take several sessions, on different occasions, to complete our definition of the problem and our understanding of the multidimensional forces contributing to it. As this understanding grows, we should move on to another set of questions -- questions which will help us understand and implement the solution to our problem. There are several meditative skills which can help us at this stage:

**Working With The Ideals Of The Higher Self.** This skill is particularly useful in determining the best possible solution to our problem. If we find that our problem of loneliness is due, in part, to the selfish and manipulative way we treat friends, for example, then the solution will lie in working to cultivate a number of spiritual ideals of the Higher Self -- affection, kindness, willingness to share, and a capacity to care about the interests and welfare of others. We can give this exercise a practical focus by carefully rehearsing ways in which we can express these ideals to specific people we know.

**Working With Divine Archetypes.** Divine archetypes contain the pattern for acting with enlightenment in every conceivable circumstances. The more we learn to interact with them, the more we master the skills of solving problems. If our problem is self-deception, we can invoke the archetype of truth to help us overcome this difficulty. Remember, divine archetypes are not creations of our imagination. Our imagination may help create the way we visualize the archetype, but these forces are real, and they are independent of us.

**Working In A Mental Laboratory Or Studio.** Many of our problems deal with the important activities of our life, such as our work or creative endeavors. In such a case, it can sometimes be helpful to create in our mind a laboratory or studio in which we can work on projects, research options, and carry on continuing conversations with personifications,

subconscious roles, and so on. The specific nature of this special place would vary with the kind of work we do. A chef would create a perfect mental kitchen; an artist, a perfect mental studio.

Once a solution is achieved, it is then important to conclude our work by focusing the power of the solution into our thoughts, feelings, and physical activities. This can be done by dwelling on a seed thought that represents the power of the solution we have discovered. The actual seed thought would, of course, vary with the kind of problem and its solution. In a personal problem, it might be "right human relations" or "self-sufficiency." In a work place problem, it might be "adaptability" or "thoroughness." In a problem arising from creative activity, it could be "resourcefulness."

In some cases, it may also be necessary to use the techniques of mental housecleaning, so that the use of seed thoughts can be effective.

### **DIVINE CATECHISM**

The more we take our problems into a meditative state and invite the greater power of the Higher Self to help us solve them in wise and enlightened ways, the more we begin to understand the value of problems in our life. Problems create the opportunity to build character. As we build skills in asking these questions, we gradually come to an interesting insight: It is really the Higher Self which is asking us questions, and finding the answers. This give-and-take of daily living is a divine catechism, through which the Higher Self teaches us the lessons of responsibility, creativity, and spiritual maturity.

Once we learn the answer to any one of the questions in the divine catechism, the problem associated with it ceases to be a problem. We know how to solve it.

### **Summary**

Our personality needs to skillfully direct the guidance we receive from the Higher Self to insure we have everything we need to know by asking penetrating questions which will invoke a deeper response.

Our personality is responsible and accountable for its actions. You are to confront your issues and challenges. You are to resolve these according to your spiritual nature, creating harmony and oneness within you.

Your questions comes from your Higher Self in order for you to discover your answers from within you.

Your Higher Self must be absorbed in the life of the personality to resolve problems.

Problems are opportunities to develop **Spiritual Character** and **Growth**.

While Creative Activities include a wide variety of inspired self-expression the Key Thought to always remember is that **You Are Always Responsible For All Of The Effects Your Creation Makes**.

**Catechism: To instruct systematically by questions and answers, and explanations and corrections.**

### **A TECHNIQUE FOR SOLVING PROBLEMS**

The technique for solving problems can be summarized as follows:

1. We begin by entering a meditative state and contacting the Higher Self.
2. We dwell on the capacity of the greater to assist the lesser in solving problems it faces. This can be done by contemplating various seed thoughts.
3. We ask questions that will help us define the problem, its antecedents, the psychological climate of which it is a part, and the real problem behind the symptoms. The meditative skills of personification and role playing can be used as appropriate.
4. We ask questions that will help us understand and implement the best possible solutions to the problem. This will often involve working with the spiritual ideals of the Higher Self or divine archetypes. For certain kinds of problems, it may also be useful to create a mental laboratory or studio.
5. We focus the solution into our thoughts, feelings, and physical activities. Seed thoughts can again be used at this stage of the technique.

**SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IV**  
**AREA 8**  
**CREATIVE SELF-DISCOVERY**

We do not come into the world just to reflect the light of the Higher Self and to worship a deity, although these are steps in the right direction. Nor are we here merely to heal and restore our thoughts, feelings and behavior, even though this effort would be a step towards spiritual maturity. Our goal, in this journey of life, is to learn how to embrace the fullness of the life of our Higher Self, and to integrate it into our habits, attitudes, good works and daily activities, enriching them and embodying them with purpose and meaning.

This journey is unending, yet each step along the way is significant and fulfilling. The path moves toward a more complete understanding of our individuality, our roots in oneness, our relationship with Spirit, and the service we can perform. We succeed by integrating our lower self with the intelligence, purpose, love, talents, and strength of the Higher Self and the divine life it serves. It is a journey to full realization of our divine nature.

This journey of life includes: developing a full range of self-expression through the personality -- physically, emotionally, and mentally. Then, as this complement of skills, habits, qualities and characteristics are developed, we are meant to take each one and attune them to the power and purpose of the Higher Self, so that each of them reveals the glory of its divine origin through its expression on earth.

The spiritual ideals of life are all active and alive at the inner dimensions of the Higher Self. We do not have to create them. They are activated in the outer dimensions of the personality as we become a creative force, infusing them into our character and making them vital parts of our individuality, identity, and self-expression. We are the creators of our reality. As creators, we are to learn to interact with the divine archetypes of the Higher Self -- the patterns for all creation -- and use them as blueprints for our activity on earth.

Creativity activates the full potential of our mind, nurtures the higher expression of compassion and love, vivifies our inner spirit, and motivates us to harness our self-expression for spiritual service. So motivated, one most likely will complete the mission, or purpose, of the Higher Self in earth life.



## A HEALTHY BALANCE

Creative activity has enriched the experience of society and the individual, at both inner and outer levels -- new innovations in science, technology, and medicine to better meet our outer needs; exploring the realms of religion, philosophy, psychology, and esoteric sciences to enrich our inner needs. But, wherever there is creativity, resistance to change can also be found.

Actually, resistance to change is a necessary part of the phenomena of creativity. The traditions and habits of society, while sometimes antagonistic to our drive to be innovated, serve to preserve and protect the accomplishments we have already made. For a society to be alive, it must be creative. But for a society to be stable, it must also have a rich accumulation of tradition and custom. Ideally, the two forces work together in healthy balance, exploring new applications of the creative spirit while maintaining and protecting the good works already achieved.

The same pattern applies to individuals as well as society. It is the force of creativity that helps the individual grow and become aware of his or her purpose and potential, but creativity must be blended with a rich awareness of tradition, experience, and habit. To maintain health and balance as an individual, we need a blend of creativity and the capacity to protect and preserve what we have achieved. Our identity is derived from both the life of spirit and the life of the personality. If we are to uncover the mystery of our life, **we must learn to view the personality as a part of the spiritual experience.**

The work of meditation should, therefore, include exercises designed to balance the creative and conserving elements within our character, and nurture a creative view of self-discovery. Such exercises should help us to:

1. Bring forth our creative resources and talents.
2. Integrate them with our habits, traditions and established views of life, thereby stabilizing our creative talents.
3. Participate in the work of "lifting up" the personality into the wholeness inherent in the Higher Self, thereby transforming the quality and significance of our life.

As we use meditative skills in this way, we gradually experience what it means to become the living essence of divine forces. We are designed to serve as a manager and builder of the divine plan for humanity.

But first, we must purify the personality and purge it of unwholesome elements. Our priorities in life need to be orientated so that we first consider the needs of the Higher Self, then the needs of the personality.

There are several basic themes we can explore in meditation, as we strive to discover our creative potential and true identity:

1. The proper function of the personality in physical life.
2. Our opportunities for service to the Higher Self and the rest of humanity.
3. Our opportunities for developing character strengths and abilities so that we may serve more wisely.
4. Our responsibility to the Higher Self, to others, to our work, and to society.
5. The enlightened response to imperfection in the world.
6. The enlightened response to public opinion and customs and pressures of mass consciousness.
7. The role we can play in civilization and culture.

Each of these themes is a broad topic for our own meditative self-discovery.

### **THE PROPER FUNCTION OF THE PERSONALITY**

There are two basic forces which can control the functioning of the personality -- the basic life of the personality itself, and the pattern of the Higher Self for the enlightened self-expression of the personality.

The vast majority of people are controlled by the basic life of the personality -- the fears, desires, cravings for sensation, and the instincts of the physical body, emotions and mind. This basic life is conditioned by subtle manifestations of the law of attraction in childhood experiences, by the groups with whom we associate, by mass consciousness, and by various unconscious forces. From a spiritual perspective, there is little difference between two people controlled by the basic life of the personality, even though the two people in question might consider themselves profoundly different. Any person under the influence of this basic life is a slave to instinct, sensation, and social conditioning.

Only when you detach from the basic life and become responsive to the Higher Self can you receive guidance from the Higher Self, by its pattern for enlightened self-expression. This pattern is an inspired blueprint for ideal thought, feeling, and behavior in every aspect of personal life. It is the true source of individuality and identity.

The personality can only function properly when it is controlled and guided by the pattern of the Higher Self. The power of the basic life is third dimensional, and it is nothing more than the power to sense and react. The pattern of the Higher Self is a fifth-dimensional idea with the power to act, to create, to build, and to heal. In order for us to tap into this pattern of the Higher Self, we must become a creative partner of the Higher Self, fully involved in being the channel through which the Higher Self works and operates. ***Note: Our multidimensional being extends well beyond the fifth dimension of the Higher Self.***

In many ways, the functioning of one's personality aligned with the Higher Self is so different from the general norm for behavior that it might seem strange at first. The average person, and society itself, is infused with greed, selfishness, materialism, competitiveness and pleasure seeking, that most of our values and goals need to be laundered and reevaluated before we can begin to understand the ideals and purposes that motivate the Higher Self.

### **OUR OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE**

In our society today, service is often filled with guilt, self-pity, the desire for attention, and even greed. The person who gives service from this perspective will only be serving the illusions of society, not the purpose of the Higher Self.

The Higher Self defines service as any act that contributes to and helps advance the evolutionary plan of Spirit for humanity, the planet, and the universe. It has little interest, if any, in providing for the pleasure, comfort or freedom from conflict of the personality. If we create a balance between our spiritual nature and our material nature, we can have a comfortable life, family, career, and peace for the personality.

### **AN ENLIGHTENED RESPONSE TO IMPERFECTION**

It might come as a surprise, but we do not live in "the best possible world." Our society has imperfections. To live the spiritual life means to respond to imperfections by seeking to heal them. The Higher Self is free of anger, fear, jealousy, ignorance, and possessiveness. The Higher Self will never support any action based on these qualities, no matter how noble our ultimate goal might be.

This is not to say that the feelings of fear, anger or jealousy will never arise in people who are aligned with their Higher Self. But when they do, they will recognize that the reactions are coming from some unenlightened aspect of the personality -- or mass consciousness. The enlightened person will exercise control of these impulses and heal the patterns that produce them.

The great strength of the Higher Self lies in its capacity to be cheerful, optimistic, forgiving and affectionate, even in the face of imperfection, opposition or resistance. The enlightened personality learns to call on these inner strengths in dealing with the problems and frustrations of living. We came to earth in order to heal the problems of society and create a better life on earth.

### **AN ENLIGHTENED RESPONSE TO MASS CONSCIOUSNESS**

As a meditator, one of the most subtle challenges you will have is learning to distinguish among impulse arising from your subconscious, impulses arising from mass consciousness, and the guidance of the Higher Self. By mental housecleaning and healing the emotions, you can master the distinction between impulses from the subconscious and guidance of the Higher Self.

The difference between impulses from mass consciousness and the Higher Self is not so readily discernible. Quite often, the voice of mass consciousness speaks with far greater authority than the quiet whisper of the Higher Self. We must detach from conforming to a group mind, and learn to recognize the subtle urges and pressures that come to us psychically from mass consciousness, responding to them with the spirit and power of self-determination.

### **THE ROLE WE CAN PLAY IN CIVILIZATION**

As we explore these basic themes meditatively, we become more aware of our true identity. We begin to understand that we have an important role in the evolution of society and civilization. Society has many imperfections, just as there are many imperfections within individuals. Society does not understand the nature of its identity or inner potential any more than most individuals do. As you understand society from the perspective of the Higher Self, you begin to see where vitality and creativity are alive and active, and how you can help. We begin to see how the Higher Self seeks to help the development of society as well as, our role in being a catalyst for constructive change. This prepares us for an active life of service.

## CREATIVE SELF-DISCOVERY

By contemplating these issues and themes in a meditative state, we set the stage for the personality to be lifted up into the light and wisdom of the Higher Self. During these times, there may be flashes of spiritual intuition and the experiencing of the actual qualities of the wisdom, love, and the will of the Higher Self. There will also be an understanding of how the Higher Self views some aspects of our life, identity, or efforts to be creative. At first, these moments of direct contact may be few, or just short flashes, but, with time and practice, we will create a knowingness of the perspective and attitude of the Higher Self towards life.

The recommended meditative exercise for exploring these themes of self-discovery begins with establishing contact with the Higher Self. Once this meditative contact is established, the next step is to increase the quality of this contact by practicing devotion to the ideals of the Higher Self. By focusing our love for the value of these higher ideals, we rise above the "ideals" of the personality that are often self-serving and colored by mass consciousness and social prejudice.

To this devotion, we can then add a steady dedication to the life and purpose of the Higher Self, thereby connecting our mind and personal will with the wisdom and will of the spiritual life of the Higher Self. This act of dedication strengthens our intention to work with the wisdom and will of the Higher Self in our life, and in contributing to society. It becomes a commitment to understand and to act in accordance with the authority of the Higher Self.

At this point, we begin the actual activity of creative self-discovery, investigating one of the themes described earlier or a related topic. There are several meditative skills we can use to assist us in this process:

1. **Working With Spiritual Ideals.** In reviewing an area of responsibility, an aspect of our thought or feeling, our role in some activity of life, or the approach we should take to a certain facet of growth, we can invoke a clear understanding of the spiritual ideals that ought to guide us by asking the Higher Self directly "What is your attitude and perspective regarding this issue?" With strong devotion and clear intention, you will experience some measure of the actual force of its perspective and attitude about this aspect of life. Usually, the response will be more of the nature of a direct experience of the quality of the ideal, rather than images we see or words we hear mentally.

2. **Personification.** In contemplating the nature of our true identity, it can be helpful to personify this true identity as an angel who has chosen to return to earth and live in our personality and serve humanity. As we view our life, opportunities, problems, and challenges through the perspective of this angel, we begin to grasp elements of our true identity and the quality of consciousness of the Higher Self.
3. **Role-Playing.** In working to better understand the contribution we can make to society, we can play the role of an assistant to a great spiritual leader who assigns us a task to complete. This will challenge our ingenuity and resourcefulness, but it can be completed within the parameters of our life experience. We may need to develop new qualities and expressions of love, patience, or wisdom to be successful. But, as we complete the task, we will be making a contribution to society.
4. **Working With Divine Archetypes.** In reviewing our enlightened response to imperfection, or the proper function of the personality in any aspect of life, it can be quite helpful to work with the appropriate archetype that governs this facet of human expression. Guided by the archetype, we can more readily know what is lacking and how it can best be corrected.
5. **Seed Thoughts.** Much insight into the nature of our identity and creative potential can be derived by meditating on seed thoughts such as "self-realization," "the life of service," "opportunities to serve," "the enlightenment of the personality," or "the greater takes care of the lesser."

Once this reflection on our identity and creative potential is complete, it is then important to conclude the meditation by honoring the insights and power gained. This part of the technique is designed to increase and activate a strong sense of personal honor, so that we will be more motivated to take the benefit we have gained and put it to work in our life. Personal honor focuses a steady intention to aspire to the best within us at all times -- and to never do less than our best. It maintains a steady flow of force between the Higher Self and the personality, so that the creative view we have attained can be sustained during our non-meditative activities.

Personal honor can be cultivated by the skillful use of the symbol of a transparent, golden jewel carved in the perfect image of our likeness. We then visualize this jewel as representing the pure life, will, love and wisdom of the Higher Self, and imagine it superimposed over our heart.

As we work with this jewel, we should come to view it as a precious possession -- a possession of great value and beauty. This marvelous treasure commands respect and honor, and inspires our desire to help it become more brilliant and filled with life.

Throughout the use of this technique for creative self-development, it is important to keep in mind that the Higher Self is truly interested in helping us cultivate this more enlightened perspective on life. At the same time, a part of our personality may create distractions by confusing these new insights with doubts and skepticism. Our duty is to keep our devotion and dedication clearly focused on a more enlightened understanding of the role we play in life. As distractions and confusion arise, we need to refer back to the techniques for mental housecleaning and use them when appropriate.

### **Brief Summary**

A person under the influence of the basic life of the personality is a slave to instincts, sensations and social conditioning.

Your Personality is a part of your spiritual experience.

With your spiritual nature and material nature in balance you can have a comfortable life, family, career, and peace for your personality.

The goal in life is to connect with your Higher Self and translate it into your habits, attitudes, and daily activities.

As creators we learn to bring forth the divine qualities and patterns of creation and use them as blueprints for our earthly activities.

We need a balance of tradition, experience and habit with our creativity. We need stability for the creative process.

Ask your Higher Self: What is your attitude and perspective regarding this issue?

Ask your Angel Being to live in your personality and to serve humanity. View your life through the perspective of your angel. Grasp your true identity and quality of higher consciousness.

Create a symbol of your Personal Honor: Visualize transparent, golden jewel carved in the perfect image of your likeness. This jewel represents the pure life, will, love and wisdom of the Higher Self. Wear it over your heart center. This jewel possess great value and beauty, and increases in brilliance according to our self-expression.

We need an Enlightened response to public opinion and customs, and pressures of mass consciousness.

- a) We are to heal the imperfections of society.
- b) The Higher Self is free of anger, fear, jealousy, ignorance and possessiveness and will never support actions based on these qualities no matter how noble the ultimate goal might be.
- c) Cheerfulness, optimistic, forgiving and affection are your spiritual strengths.
- d) Detach from the group mind. Recognize the whisper of spirit.
- e) We need to dedicate our mind and personal will to work with the wisdom and will of the spiritual life of the Higher Self.



## **A TECHNIQUE FOR CREATIVE SELF-DISCOVERY**

The techniques for creative self-discovery can be summarized as follows:

1. We begin by entering a meditative state and contacting the Higher Self.
2. We build devotion to the ideals of the Higher Self.
3. To this devotion, we add dedication to the life and purpose of the Higher Self.
4. We investigate the nature of our creative potential, and the way the Higher Self views our work, our responsibilities, and the contributions we can make to life. In pursuing this understanding, there are several meditative skills that can be helpful: spiritual ideals, personification, role-playing, divine archetypes, and seed thoughts.
5. We conclude by honoring the insights and new perspectives gained, making it a matter of personal honor to incorporate this life of the Higher Self into our daily self-expression. This activity can be helped through the use of the symbol of a golden jewel.

## Spiritual Channels Opening and Development

With the information provided in Spiritual Development 1, 2, 3 and 4 you have the basic knowledge and techniques as to how to Open and Develop your Spiritual Channels. While there are thousands of **Spiritual Channels and Sub-Channels** this list will give you something to think about and perhaps explore.

**ASCENSION** - Technically the taking of one's physical body with one upon leaving this plane. But can relate to a state of consciousness which is spiritually detached from this world.

**ADHESION-LOVE** - or **COHESION-LOVE**, this is the property of spiritual love. Spiritual love is a state of consciousness through which an individual has cohesion with the Universe. Spiritual love is the binding force of universal consciousness.

**ANALYSIS-AWARENESS-CLARITY** - The ability to see clearly is fundamental to a spiritual growth path. In the context of spiritual growth there is a universal reality and one needs to be able to see oneself within the context of that reality.

**COMFORT** - There are situations within any growth path which are painful. This pain is a mechanism which helps to clarify the passage of the old and the emergence of the new. Pain, in this context, is a very good and necessary thing and should not be fought. The attempt to run from, hide from or remove such pain is one indication of a lack of readiness to move on to higher plateaus of spiritual awareness. The spiritual comfort energy enhances the awareness of the reason for the pain and the consciousness of the ultimate good that the pain represents and guides you through the pain.

**CREATION** - This is the ability to understand the fundamental nature of existence within the great energy spheres of the universal matrix.

**CREATIVITY-ILLUMINATION** - In a spiritual sense these two energies are the same. Creativity is simply the understanding of what already exists, even though it may exist outside of the current reality with which one is familiar.

**DETACHMENT** - Due to the intense magnetism with which emotionalism attracts people, the idea of detachment, particularly as it relates to love, is one of the most difficult for humans to grasp. Detachment is a basic property through which a spiritual journey becomes an expression of true universal growth.

**FREEDOM** - Spiritual freedom is the capacity to make choices for one's spiritual growth outside the bounds of material considerations.

**HARMONIZATION** - This is the energy of harmonizing of energies. In many situations apparent disharmonies are the product of attachment to a biased point of view of the energy perceived. This can apply to either energies within one's own matrix or that of others (or the world in general). This assists in suspending the biased point of view to allow for greater interacting freedom.

**HEALING** - This is a generalized spiritual healing energy which can enhance the consciousness of any form or method of spiritual healing that one wishes to do.

**MEMORY** - In the context of a spiritual expression, memory relates to continuity. After the rudimentary facets of spiritual growth are complete, it becomes necessary to experience growth in a uniform continuum from spiritual birth to spiritual completion. Without this, growth deteriorates into an amorphous chain of growth steps without the sense of completeness of the individual parts.

**PEACE** - The peace energy has less to do with what we normally think of as peace (non-aggression) and more to do with confidence in the subtle laws which exist. Peace is not just the absence of conflict or disharmony, it is also the presence of an unswerving confidence in the rightness of the direction(s) we are taking. This confidence eliminates apprehension.

**POWER-PROJECTION** - The ability to extend ones growth awareness to energies in one's life which are not a direct result of one's personal matrix.

**PRECIPITATION** - Spiritual precipitation is a state of consciousness that counterbalances the tremendous material pull of the physical world. Psychic precipitation almost always includes the idea of wanting to get something, but spiritual precipitation has as an aim the allowing of one's essential nature to flower. In other words, the energy of spiritual precipitation is the energy of coming into balance with the pull of materialism and the magnetism of one's inner nature.

**RESURRECTION** - The property of life renewal. The most common experience of this power is during the spring season when nature brings itself out of a dormant state.

**SYNCHRONIZATION** - There are many points in a spiritual journey where we are allowed to temporarily circumvent various needed lessons or experiences in order to keep from being pulled off of our path. This has the affect of throwing our "timing" off (displacing time). The energy of synchronization assists us in re-establishing the essential timing of our life flow.

**TRANSMUTATION-TRANSUBSTANTIATION** - This is the ability to alter the basic quality of energy from one level to another. This has the effect of altering the basic nature of the affect that the energy has on other energies within it's own matrix.

**UNITY** - This is similar in many qualities to the Love energy except that the love energy does not have as an inherent property the ability to understand continuity of it's own force. This energy provides the sense of continuity of the love energy's affect over a wider matrix.

**SPIRITUAL POWER of REGENERATION.** Regeneration is the process of applying universal life force to a plane of existence in ones life which has been neglected (usually because of an overabundance of use or consideration of other areas). Here are six levels that you can regenerate.

**PHYSICAL  
EMOTIONAL  
INTELLECTUAL  
FEELING  
MENTAL  
SPIRITUAL**

## **PSYCHIC CHANNELS**

A major part of **Spiritual Development is the Closing of your Psychic Channels** so here are the main **Psychic Channels** for you **To Close Down.**

**Since every Psychic Channel has a corresponding Spiritual Channel you can Open these Spiritual Channels along with those listed above.**

**Analysis** - This is the channel which promotes separation and clarity of psychic energies either in those energies being perceived or in those energies being used.

**Clairaudience** - This is the ability to hear the *voice of subtle energies.*

**Clairvoyance** - This is the ability to see the *images of subtle energies*.

**Empathy** - The ability to feel energies of a subtle nature.

**Kronopathy** - The ability to influence the time and/or cycle of anything/anybody that is connected to the karmic time continuum. Kronopathy concerns itself with a wide variety of energies involved with time perception and time manipulation.

**Precipitation** - Technically this is the ability to bring something tangible into being through thought alone. It can also be viewed as the ability to attract into one's life that which one puts their attention on.

**Precognition** - The ability to perceive things in advance of their actual occurrence. In reality, precognition is a sub-channel of psychic analysis.

**Projection (Actual)** - The ability to transport oneself to another location through the projection of one's belief in their reality to a position other than the one they occupy. This can also be the ability to bi-locate.

**Psychokinesis (P.K.)** - This is technically the ability to affect physical objects by thought alone. There are also levels of influencing matter at an atomic level and the changing of the inherent quality of energy of an object or place.

**Psychometry** - This is the ability to read the history of an object or place though touching it.

**Reflection** - The ability to become psychically invisible. Psychic invisibility is a sub-channel of Projection and is the ability to render oneself undetectable to psychic awareness.

**Retrocognition** - Just like precognition only instead of seeing images of the future you see images of the past. This is a sub-channel of Kronopathy.

**Suspension** - The ability to suspend the flow of psychic level life force.

**Telepathy (Infusion)** - The ability to overwhelm a person, place, situation, object, body or certain points in various levels of existence with thought to the extent of changing the reality of the recipient.

**Telepathy (Receiving)** - Generally the ability to receive thoughts from another existing entity on various existence levels.

**Telepathy (Transmitting)** - Generally the ability to implant your thoughts into the mind of another existing entity on various existence levels usually with the connotation of having the other entity believe that the thoughts are their own.

**Visualization** - The ability to clearly image. The usual connotation is the causing of things to happen although there are other possibilities.

## General Meditation Beginning

12/21/2002

1. **RELAX** your **body** by making it comfortable and withdrawing your attention from it.

**Relax** your **emotions** and begin to create an inner state of Peace and Harmony

**Relax** your **mind** and begin to turn your thoughts inward.  
Begin

2. **Now, CONCENTRATE** on your desire to connect with your **Higher Self**

3. **Lets begin the process of DETACHMENT: by follow these** to quiet all of your thoughts. **There thoughts**

I have a **physical body** which is the home for my Higher Self, but, I am more than my physical body.

I have **emotions** which is energy that can be used by my Higher Self, but, I am more than my feelings and emotions.

I have a **mind** which is important but, I am more than my thoughts and memories.

**While** I have a body, emotions, mind and experiences I am more that that.

**I AM my Higher Self** a center of **Pure Love, Wisdom and Strength. That is who I AM!**

**I AM a child of the Universe filled with Love and Peace, Joy and Bliss, Wisdom and Understanding.**

4. **ATTUNEMENT**

**Begin** to Attune to your Higher Self and focus your attention on the **Power** and **Love** of your **Higher Self** as you are now entering into a Meditative State. **See, feel and sense** your personal strength and consciousness merging with the **love** and **wisdom** of your **Higher Self**.

**Your conscious mind is to remain active and aware throughout this meditation as your ego-self communicates with your Higher Self.**

Begin to magnetize your ego-self with the **Wisdom** of your **Higher Self** by **Loving** its **Knowledge** and **Intelligence**.

Begin to flood your ego-self with the **Kindness** of your **Higher Self** by **Loving** its **Affection** and **Compassion** towards you.

Begin to invite your ego-self to merge with the **Strength** of your **Higher Self** by **Loving** its **Power** and **Divine Will**.

You are now the **Essence** of your **Higher Self** filled with its **Love, Wisdom, and Strength**. **Sensing** a deep love and acceptance flowing in and around you.