

A Small Introduction to Meditation

by Achim Wolf, Germany

I. Essential aspects of true meditation

1. What does the term 'meditation' mean?

The term 'meditation' springs from the primal-term 'MEDITATIA' and means 'sinking-fathoming' (a fathoming through sinking-in). Meditation means sinking-in (Indian 'Samadhi'), in which the thinking-organ, through concentrated, neutral contemplation, becomes conscious no longer of itself but only of the chosen object of contemplation and flows together with it. With Buddha (approx. 560–480 BC) this flowing-together is the last stage of the 8-limbed path of attentiveness. The oldest written record of the meditation-teaching handed down anywhere in the world is composed in Sanskrit and is to be found under the so-called Satipatthāna meditation. In India, Sanskrit is the language of the scholars, as Latin is with us.

2. Which fulfilments does the human being strive for through meditation?

A meditation, that is to say a sinking-fathoming, refers to the neutral fathoming of the true inner self, to one's own personality as well as to life and to all that is existent in general, with which one's own consciousness stands in constant relationship. The meditating human being directs himself or herself towards finding the contents of his or her self (self-identification) and recognising them (self-cognition), but thereby also towards finding the contents of all things (identification) that want or need to be fathomed. Meditation makes possible the working-out of inner calmness and recovery, the gathering of new powers and energies, the creating of true love and freedom as well as peace, harmony, joy, happiness and equalisedness for the meditating person himself or herself. But meditation also fosters the clear perception and the recognition of the things contemplated in meditation. From this arise knowledge, experience and living-experience, and ultimately wisdom. Wisdom is nothing other than the relatively highest-possible form of the experienced and lived-through knowledge in a particular field. Meditation is a contact with the truthly inner self, with one's own personality, one's own consciousness.

In the truthly sense, meditation constitutes an act of Being, an absolute and complete being-alone with oneself. For the human being this means a state in which, quite spontaneously, he or she opens all windows and doors to new knowledge and new cognitions for all his or her senses and his or her consciousness. Unfortunately, many human beings are afraid of this, because through meditating they would be confronted with themselves and would have to recognise who and what they truthly are.

3. What true meditation is not

a) A mere relaxation exercise

Even though very deep states of relaxation can be attained during meditation, meditation cannot be reduced to a mere physical relaxation exercise.

b) Religious cultic act

Every true form of meditation has not the slightest to do with the practising of religious and cult-religious acts, or with any other cultic rituals. Meditation is solely and alone the school of clear, unprejudiced observing, which leads to the recognition of the actual reality.

c) Hallucinatory ecstasy and visualisation

Many sects, religions, gurus and so-called 'enlightened ones' by their own grace preach confused stuff about the manner in which meditation is supposed to proceed. In doing so, they demand of their believers, in part, insane practices in which the practitioners put themselves into ecstatic states — for example, by screeching loudly or throwing their heads wildly to and fro. By this means, supposedly 'divine' experiences or enlightening experiences are meant to be forced. In reality, all this has not the slightest to do with true meditation and is, moreover, dangerous for the consciousness. So-called 'guided journeys of imagination' likewise have nothing to do with meditation; they harbour the danger that the meditating person becomes entangled in unreal worlds of imagination and loses himself or herself in confused fantasies that no longer have anything to do with his or her very own personality, with his or her dispositions, inclinations and possibilities, and that additionally make him or her dependent upon them.

4. What true, effective meditation is

a) Practice

Meditation is above all practice, that is to say the meditative exercise. One can talk much about it and write even more about it. All of this, however, is useless if no practical exercises follow the explanations and pointers.

b) Neutrality

Neutrality is the thought-based and feeling-based non-participation in a matter, a process, or in any other conceivable event that comes into one's own realm of perception from the outside world or from one's own inner nature. In order to be neutral, an event, a thought or feeling, a deed or action must be approached uninvolvedly, objectively and unprejudicedly. In doing so, the object of perception must be perceived without personal valuation or judgement and so forth, and identified true-to-reality in its actual state (its Ist-state).

Every truthly form of meditation is based on an all-encompassing neutrality — this both towards one's own thoughts and feelings and towards external factors such as space and time and so forth. Both harbour certain difficulties for the human being. For, as a rule, from childhood on he or she is brought up to create personal opinions about each and everything, which he or she builds up into veritable fortresses over years and decades. Meditation, however, is neutral. If thoughts surface, then these are to be seen as what they are: only thoughts. If the meditating person practises letting his or her thoughts always pass by neutrally — that is, without engaging with them — then his or her initially strong feelings, too, become calmer from time to time and gain in neutrality. The meditating person learns that things come and go, arise and pass away, and that he or she does not necessarily have to connect his or her opinions and views with them.

c) Presentness

Meditation always takes place in the 'here and now'. Only the here and now breathes true life. Therefore meditative efforts are always founded upon a sharply present-related attentiveness,

because only there, in the present moment (which, according to the latest cognitions, lasts exactly 2.7 seconds), can that which is true be discovered unadulteratedly. The attention thus does not stray off into the past or the possible future, but during the meditation remains exclusively in the here and now of the present and dwells with the object of contemplation.

d) Concentration and attentiveness

Meditation is certainly concentration and attentiveness; however, one cannot restrict it to these alone. Concentration and attentiveness are two foundations of meditation, which stand in first place in the daily practice. Concentration is the bundled directing of attentiveness onto an object. This is best compared with a torch, whose cone of light can be enlarged or reduced by turning the head of the lamp. The larger the circle of light becomes through adjustment of the lamp, the more weakly it is illuminated. Attentiveness, in this example, now equates to the choice of size of the cone of light that one needs in order to illuminate the selected object. Once one has fixed the object with the torch, one turns the head of the lamp so that the light rays experience a maximum of bundling upon the fixed object and the entire available luminosity of the lamp comes to concentration on this one point. Nevertheless, the cone of light must be large enough to be able to illuminate the object completely. Attentiveness and concentration must therefore be finely tuned to each other.

5. What is the prerequisite for meditating?

In any case, concentration is the very most important prerequisite for meditation. Therefore concentration absolutely must be learned first. Concentration is a defence against everything that prevents meditation — such as, for example, the straying-off of the thoughts or the intrusion of extraneous thoughts, the arising of sleep, the nervous and psychical strain, as well as restlessness and impatience. Through concentration, these factors impairing the meditation can be switched off, after which the human being can turn to the actual meditation. Concentration is thus the necessary condition for learning and carrying out meditation.

6. What is concentration?

Concentration means a maximal condensing of the attention onto a single point. In this, it is important to know that thinking alone is by no means concentration yet. Furthermore, the use of the will is to be refrained from absolutely in any concentration, because through the use of the will any success in a concentration exercise is completely prevented. Strength of will and concentration have not the slightest to do with each other. Example: if you are unable to fall asleep, and you then make willful efforts in order to be able to do so after all, you will never succeed. Through the mustering of your will you put yourself into very lively thought-activity and thus work directly against falling asleep. The more will you muster, the less you relax. Rather, you put yourself into agitation and high tension. As with falling asleep, a correct concentration requires a precondition: namely, consciousness-based and physical passivity, respectively relaxation. Thus the will has nothing whatsoever in common with the use of the inner — that is, your psychical and consciousness-based — powers.

II. Examples from meditation practice

1. A simple concentration exercise

One simple exercise among many concentration exercises is the exercise with a candle: sit comfortably at a table and place a burning candle about 1 metre in front of you. Sitting quite loosely, gaze for 5 to 12 minutes at the lower edge of the candle's flame, whereby you should always think only the word 'sun'. Once you have reached the 12th minute, switch off all thinking during the exercise for the six following days. You thus concentrate only on the lower edge of the flame for 12 minutes, without letting a single thought arise. You can then broaden and extend the exercise little by little.

2. The breathing exercise

There are various ways to learn meditation and meditative concentration. The simplest and most easily learnable way, however, leads by way of the breath, whereby you learn to observe your own breath and to recognise it clearly. In the breathing meditative-exercise it is a matter of your concentrating on your own nose. More precisely, you should observe the breath that passes through the nose. You observe purely how the breath works: on inhaling, how the breath strikes against the nostrils and passes through, and how it is exhaled again. In this, it is solely and alone a matter of a pure observation of the breathing-function at the nostril, without any thought — a pure concentration exercise, then, in which you only observe, without intervening in any way in the function of the breath. If, however, extraneous thoughts now appear in doing so, then you must quite simply push these aside. Extraneous thoughts from the consciousness or subconsciousness are thus quite simply only to be registered, after which you immediately direct the attention back onto the meditation-object — that is, the flow of your own breath. If, as a practitioner, you are startled by extraneous thoughts, you quite simply concentrate afresh and anew on your breathing exercise, respectively on the breathing-movements at the nostril. In the breathing exercise you leave the concentration upon the process of inhaling and exhaling, respectively upon the striking of the breathing-air at the nostril and the streaming-out of the air from the nostrils. You observe this process attentively and concentratively, nothing else. The breathing exercise, respectively breathing meditation, is a very good and valuable meditation exercise that calms the consciousness as well as the psyche (thoughts and feelings). You can extend it up to a duration of 20 minutes or more. Even a very short duration of 3 minutes or less is very beneficial, if you carry out the meditation concentratively and purely-observingly, as well as without thoughts. The same applies to other short meditations, as are vividly described in the books "Introduction to Meditation" and "Meditation from Clear Sight", by Eduard Albert Meier.

3. Extraneous thoughts and distractions during meditation

Every human being meditates every day, though mostly only in an unconscious wise — when, for example, he or she becomes engrossed in the reading of a book, contemplates something intently, or listens, sunk in it, to a beautiful melody; when he or she perhaps writes a text, paints a picture, and so forth. Meditation is first and foremost pure concentration on a particular object of the attention. In meditation it is a matter of your perceiving a thing, a human being, a picture, a tree, a flower, your own breath — or whatever it may be — as neutrally, sharply, objectively and precisely as possible. The meditation-object is to be fathomed in its IST (its 'is-state') and its true, real nature recognised. Besides the gaining of calmness, equalisedness, peace, inner freedom, harmony and love in one's own inner nature, the second main aspect of meditation is thus the gaining of a clear, incontrovertible knowledge about the pure, true nature of a matter, a thing, a human being, and so forth. The fundamental prerequisite for this is the absolutely neutral, unprejudiced, bias-free and, above all, thought-free perception of the meditation-object. Without one's own thoughts, the attention may rest only upon

the selected meditation-object, respectively concentration-object, and upon nothing else. In this connection, extraneous thoughts are all those thoughts that are not directed at the object of the meditation, because they disturb the pure concentration on the object. If extraneous thoughts surface during the meditation exercise, then you should simply only register them, after which you effortlessly and immediately direct the attention back onto the meditation-object. With a little effort you can easily meet all physical and psychical disturbances, respectively distractions, from your own inner nature in doing so. Your panacea in these situations of the straying-off of the concentration is always the registering concentration. Through the pure registering you do not try to actively change a state, but rather help yourself to become mindful of your original objective again. As a meditating person, you simply lead yourself gently and unspectacularly back to your meditation-object. Through regular practising, there sets in within you — sometimes already after a few exercises — the so-called clear-sightedness, in which you only purely contemplate and purely perceive the object of meditation, completely neutrally, clearly and without your own thoughts or valuations, without judging attachments, feelings or emotions.

III. Benefit and effects of meditation practice

1. Benefit of meditation

a) Schooling of the consciousness

Meditation is an effective aid for the recognition and conscious shaping of all mental-factors (i.e. consciousness, thoughts, feelings, psyche) and individual-factors (i.e. personality, character, ego, memory, etc.) of the human consciousness. Successes of this schooling show themselves, for example, in a stabilisation of the psyche, in an increasing certainty of the mastery of emotional stirrings, and in the enhancement of the wholly-physical well-being. As a further consequence, meditation can lead to the conscious mastery of all physical, psychical and consciousness-based factors, since it constitutes the only means with such a potential.

b) Building up a meditation-discipline

The term discipline is often completely misunderstood, namely in the sense of an authoritarian compulsion, as well as of drill and order. The actual value, however, contains an ordering-in by one's own free will. Through the voluntary form of discipline towards oneself in regard to the regular exercise of meditation, the meditative exercises become a positive power of habit.

c) Enrichment of life

Many a person may ask what meditation has to do with real life, and whether this is not just a fashion of religiously or esoterically tinged outsiders. Others say that one can also live really and intensely without meditation. The truth is that meditation and life mutually enrich each other, and that meditation is just as much life as life, too, is meditation. The meditative exercise is an ideal method through which the human being can get to know himself or herself without danger in the manifold situations of daily existence, and can train values, cognitions and powers; for the surroundings are his or her own I, respectively his or her consciousness, that is to say his or her personality itself.

d) Appreciation of the stillness

If the meditating person learns to gently tame his or her inner, continual prattle of thoughts, then the stillness shines forth within him or her. The mantle of calmness spreads over his or her consciousness and a pleasant emptiness fills him or her. Everything loud and noisy vanishes. Meditation becomes the true source of recovery and relaxation, because the human being learns to listen to the stillness. In this stillness it becomes possible for the meditating person to get to know another side of his or her self, namely his or her true and innermost self. This state is possible only through concentrative exercise, and soon becomes, for everyone who treads the path of meditation through steady training, the true pole of calm — one that is available even when the human being threatens to be dragged downwards in the undertow of the hectic world and its busyness.

2. General effects of meditation

Meditation exhibits a great palette of very useful effects. It helps not only to cope better with everyday life, as well as with stress, problems, grief and worries, and so forth. Meditation calms and creates inner peace, equalisedness, joy, inner freedom and harmony. If the human being really masters meditation, he or she can, through it, become free of habits, of vices and addictions. Even the pulse and the blood pressure, and indeed the body temperature, can be controlled and influenced to a certain degree. Even certain quantities of toxins and alcohol, as well as nicotine and drugs, can be restricted or even neutralised through a suitable meditation — but that already reaches into the advanced school of meditation, which rarely anyone attains. A further benefit of meditation lies in the fact that life is more appreciated, that changes are accepted more calmly, and losses can be coped with better. Meditation helps one to live life more consciously, to be more empathic, more life-affirming, more compassionate and more loving. Meditation makes it possible to create true love, to face death understandingly and without fear and hatred but rather in reverence, as well as to master the grief with dignity and in the understanding of reality.

A scientific report from November 2014 confirms that correctly carried-out meditation alters the genetic makeup of the human being. Whoever strengthens his or her consciousness and his or her heart through meditation simultaneously does something for his or her physical health as well. The consciousness can thus alter the genes. This is the astonishing result of a study by researchers around Richard Davidson of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Richard Davidson is co-author of the book 'The Healing Power of Meditation' (German edition published by Arbor Verlag). According to this, years of meditating lead to clear molecular changes in the genetic makeup. Meditating also prevents inflammations. It helps not only to consolidate concentration and equalisedness and to relax, but can also demonstrably prevent illnesses.

3. What does meditation bring about in the brain?

The meditative brain-activity not only has a very beneficial effect, but is in fact, at bottom, even the normal function in the actual primal-state of the brain. Naturally, the two halves of the brain would work together harmoniously and complement each other, whereby the human being would be an equalised Wesen. The primal-state of the brain can be restored by the human being through valuable and frequent meditation exercises, whereby everything that has gotten out of control can normalise itself again. If, therefore, human beings as a whole make an effort with the exercises and the pursuit of meditation, then that means that both halves of the brain of the human being form themselves in a primal-state manner again, synchronise and coordinate themselves, whereby in humankind a wholly-encompassing equalisedness and harmony is generated. From this, true love for the fellow

human being and true love for all fellow human beings, as well as for the entire fauna and flora, forms itself. But from this also go forth inner peace and inner freedom, which widen and spread themselves outwardly.

IV. Conscious shaping of psyche and consciousness in everyday life

1. Meditative basis for the positive attitude of consciousness

The 'meditative basis for the positive attitude of consciousness' means that the consciousness is knowingly steered and consciously shaped through meditative thoughts and feelings. The meditative form consists in the fact that, consciously and again and again, particular thoughts are cultivated, through which corresponding feelings are triggered, which have a beneficial and positive-equalising effect on the psyche and shape it. Thereby the consciousness, respectively the personality, is stimulated in the same positive wise. Thus a consciously positive attitude of consciousness arises within the human being. In practice this means, for you, that you cultivate the meditative thoughts and feelings again and again by thinking or murmuring a particular sentence several times daily — three to four times — for about five minutes, and consciously practising attentiveness on what is spoken. You can use the same sentence, as required, for a single day or for several days, respectively repeat it for as long and as often until the content of the sentence becomes a conscious matter-of-course for you.

2. Consciousness-shaping sentences for daily practice

As a practical example, I would like to present to you a few consciousness-shaping sentences from the book 'Meditation from Clear Sight', which you can say to yourself again and again in daily life:

«Truthly I know that my thoughts are my might, and that with them I determine everything of my own self.»

«Truthly I am glad and happy and full of love.»

«Always I remain relaxed and thereby gain might over myself.»

The last sentence contains two parts that are separate and yet belong together, namely:

1. «Always I remain relaxed»

The mode of effect of this sentence, and the components of the consciousness and the psyche involved in it, are explained in detail in a recommendable article by Mariann Uehlinger, which is named in the source references to the lecture. In short, it is thus: we can only generate and maintain a salutary control over ourselves if we remain loose and relaxed, whereby we can diminish, respectively switch off, flightiness, nervousness and hectic haste. Thereby, in turn, we can consciously use our powers and also apply them prudently and in a controlled manner in difficult situations, whereby we become freer within ourselves and can avert harm from ourselves.

2. «and thereby gain might over myself»

These are only three of many possible consciousness-shaping sentences. You can of course tailor these at any time to your own liking and to your personal needs, as well as create your own sentences and make them usable for your personal well-being.

3. The mental-block meditation

Now I would like to commend to you one more special meditation, one that is easy to learn and always applicable, namely the so-called mental-block meditation. The mental-block is nothing other than the material consciousness, with the thoughts, the feelings and the psyche. The mental-block is the most important factor in regard to the conduct and shaping of the human being's life. With the mental-block meditation, every human being can hold a dialogue with his or her own mental-block, and thereby shape himself or herself beneficially and influence his or her overall personality for his or her personal well-being and benefit.

This is possible by thinking, again and again in meditative form, the following seven reality-sentences:

«I live in love.

I live in peace.

I live in freedom.

I live in harmony.

I live carefree.

I live in health.

I live in joy.»

They are seven reality-words, respectively reality-sentences, in the form of the 'It is so', which — strung together — are repeated one after the other in continual succession. This meditation can be practised at will, just as the duration of the meditation, too, can be determined according to one's own discretion. In this form of meditation, the entire palette of the powers of consciousness, of the thoughts and feelings, as well as of the psyche and all relationships arising from them, is at work. Thereby a stability of the entire mental-block is built up, which makes it possible to go through both joys and sorrows without the inner equilibrium being disturbed in doing so.

The form 'It is so' means nothing other than that the thoughts, upon speaking — respectively silently thinking — these meditation-sentences, are such that, for example, the sentence «I live in peace» is thought as a fact and a given reality. The subconsciousness, namely, knows no 'could, would, would like to, should' and so forth, but only the clear, unambiguous pictorial-language of the 'It is so'. If something is to be attained, then the thoughts and feelings must be shaped in such a way that that which is wanted is shaped as already existent and real in the thoughts and feelings and in the consciousness, and is perceived as given in the sense of 'It is so'. The subconsciousness then works on independently with it, like a computer that accepts clear and unambiguous data, respectively inputs, and processes them further according to a logical programme. You, dear listeners, are thus yourselves the programmers of your consciousness, and turn the might of your thoughts to positive use through the collaboration of your subconsciousness.

By the way: autogenic training and correctly carried-out autosuggestions, too, are forms of meditation, provided they are carried out neutrally and in such a form that always exactly that is thought and held at the centre of the concentration which is wanted, and not that which is not wanted. Through the mental-block meditation, through every other meditation for the positive shaping of the consciousness, as well as through autogenic training and autosuggestion, many powers and capabilities can be strengthened or newly developed.

4. The human being is the creator of his or her inner self

Dear readers, each of us has the shaping of his or her life in his or her own hands through the might of the thoughts, for each of us is the smith of his or her own destiny. Decisive in this is the inner focus of the thoughts, out of which corresponding feelings go forth. This inner focus is comparable to the light-ray of the previously mentioned torch, with which we steer our thoughts and feelings onto a particular point of our choice and bundle our powers. In every second of our life we decide onto what we direct the inner focus of the thoughts. The focus is the concentration of the thought-based and feeling-based attention onto an object of perception, onto a thought, a feeling, an emotion, onto a presentiment, an impulse, an inspiration, and so forth. In truth, the directing of our thoughts — and thereby the might and power of our consciousness — determines the course of our whole life. The wonderful thing about it is that we ourselves can determine the directing of our thoughts and feelings, and thus the might of our consciousness and subconsciousness, through our free will, in order to change ourselves and to improve ourselves step by step.

Already now we shape — whether consciously or unconsciously — in every second, by virtue of our mental might, our inner nature, our ego, our character, the will, the objectives, and every single deed and action of our current life. That onto which we — consciously or unconsciously — concentratively direct our attention and hold fast in the consciousness will, with absolute certainty, become reality, provided it lies within the realm of the logical and of the realistic possibilities that are pre-given by the natural laws. Meditation is a gift of the human being to himself or herself. Through meditation, we can ourselves determine the course of our life, our powers and capabilities, the knowledge and the wisdom, as well as the love, the inner peace, the inner freedom and harmony, and can consciously unfold ourselves.

Heartfelt thanks for your attention!

List of sources

A) Sources: 1. 'Introduction to the Introduction to Meditation' by Stephan Rickauer, published by the Wassermannzeit-Verlag of FIGU.

B) Book 'Introduction to Meditation' by 'Billy' Eduard Albert Meier / BEAM, published by the Wassermannzeit-Verlag of FIGU.

C) Book 'Meditation from Clear Sight' by 'Billy' Eduard Albert Meier / BEAM, published by the Wassermannzeit-Verlag of FIGU.

D) Article 'Thoughts about the sentence «Always I remain relaxed and thereby gain might over myself.»' by Mariann Uehlinger, published by the Wassermannzeit-Verlag of FIGU.

Source: <http://www.figu.org/ch/verein/periodika/bulletin/2009/nr69/stets-bleibe-ich-entspannt>

Note on the terminology used

The following German terms carry specific meanings within the FIGU teaching and have been rendered according to FIGU convention rather than by their ordinary dictionary equivalents:

- wahrheitlich → "truthly" (a FIGU coinage; deliberately distinct from "truly" or "in truth").

- Macht → "might"; Kraft / Kräfte → "power / powers". The distinction is upheld throughout (cf. the FIGU title Might of the Thoughts).
- Achtsamkeit → "attentiveness" (not "mindfulness").
- Ausgeglichenheit → "equalisedness" (a state of inner balance).
- ausgeartet / Ausartung → "gotten out of control (of the good human nature)"; not "degenerate", per the FIGU explanation that this has nothing to do with degeneration.
- Ur- (as in Urzustand, Urbegriff) → "primal" ("primal-state", "primal-term").
- Erfahrung → "experience"; Erleben → "living-experience" (the two are kept distinct).
- Empfindung / Gefühl / Emotion are treated as distinct: feeling and emotion are not interchanged.
- Klarblick → "clear-sightedness" (cf. the book title Meditation from Clear Sight).
- Mentalblock → "mental-block"; Mentalfaktoren → "mental-factors"; Individualfaktoren → "individual-factors".
- Bewusstsein → "consciousness"; bewusstseinsmässig → "consciousness-based"; Unterbewusstsein → "subconsciousness".
- Wirklichkeitssätze → "reality-sentences"; the seven mental-block sentences follow the established FIGU rendering ("I live in love", etc.).
- Wesen is retained untranslated (an independently existing life-form with its own individuality and personality).
- Ziel, in a consciousness-related sense, carries the meaning of "fulfilment" rather than "goal"; where the surrounding sense is ordinary it is rendered as "objective".

Book and publisher names use the established FIGU English titles; "Wassermannzeit-Verlag" (Age of Aquarius Publishing House) is retained. British spelling is used throughout.