

Sitting Meditations

*To achieve an interior act, a man must collect
all his powers as if into a corner of his soul where,
hiding away from all images and forms, he can get to work.
Here, he must come to a forgetting and an unknowing.*

Meister Eckhart (1260-1327)

“Have any of you ever captured an elephant?” I often ask this question at the beginning of the first class. So far, no one has.

Imagine that an elephant has escaped from Munich’s Hellabrunn Zoo and is now on its way to Marienplatz. He’s curious and just wants to have a look around.

Let’s imagine that we want to catch him and bring him back to the zoo. How might we succeed at that? How would we capture him? For example, what would happen if we tried to climb on him in order stop him?

It wouldn’t work! The elephant is too strong, and would simply continue on its journey.

One could also try to restrain him with a rope. What would happen? If one were to do this, they’d certainly be dragged along behind the elephant. So, that wouldn’t work either.

We could, however, tie the rope to something particularly strong and stable, for example to a firmly anchored bridge post or a large tree. For this we would have to know for sure that the rope is very sturdy and could withstand a lot of force. What would happen?

The elephant would pull on the rope and perhaps also go around our stable anchor several times in a circle until it was finally tired out. And in the meantime we could relax.

I share this short story because the elephant described is a metaphor for our thoughts and our mind. When we meditate, we are confronted with the mind and its thoughts. If we are not careful, they drag us along and we become lost in them.

When meditating, it’s important to learn to distance ourselves from thought. To make this easier, you can concentrate on something else. In our story a bridge post or tree serves the purpose. Maintaining this focus is an essential part of all forms of meditation.¹

In class, four separate objects of focus for sitting meditation are presented, namely:

- the breath
- the mantra “Maranatha”
- the point between the eyebrows
- the mantra “So’ham” / “I am That”

Breathing Meditation

Focussing on the breath is practiced in countless meditation schools. Some lines of tradition, such as the Vipassana tradition, are primarily concerned with insight into thoughts, emotions and physical processes and their interactions. “When you are having a bad time, examine that experience, observe it mindfully, study the phenomenon and learn its mechanics. The way out of a trap is to study the trap itself, learn how it is built. You do this by taking the thing apart piece by piece. The trap can’t trap you if it has been taken to pieces. The result is freedom.”² The observation of one’s breath works as an anchor point, keeping one from getting lost in the various thoughts, emotions and physical reactions that may arise in the mind during this exercise.

The MBSR program’s sitting meditations, also use the breath as a primary anchor point for the purpose of “keeping one focused” and from here observing one’s thoughts without judging.

In the breathing meditation we concentrate on the incoming and outgoing breath as it enters and exits the nostrils, not paying attention to thoughts that may arise. The aim is to linger in the silence, turning our awareness more inwards.³

Instructions

The singing bowl is struck once

Sit relaxed and upright

Focus on the nostrils

The breath goes in

The breath comes out again

Completely relaxed, in your own rhythm; if your attention wanders, relax and return to your nostrils

If you want to, you can also count to it, for example, inhale on 1, exhale on 1; inhale on 2 and exhale, inhale on 3 ... and so on until 5, and then start again from the beginning. Or you can also say “in” when you inhale and “out” when you exhale.⁴

Now and then, the singing bowl is struck once.

Now and then remind participants to focus on the nostrils ...

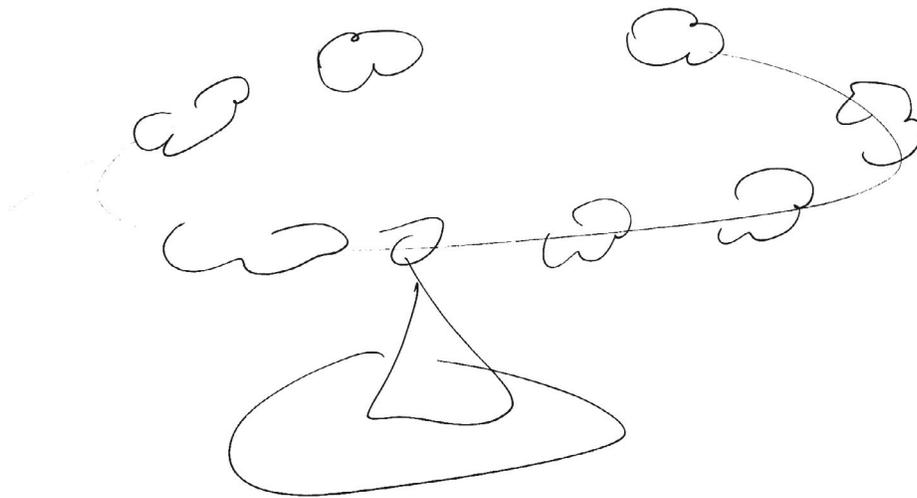
At the end, the singing bowl is struck 3 times

If you want to practice this meditation technique regularly, it’s best to do it for 15 to 20 minutes once or twice a day.

In class, the meditation time is gradually increased. During the first session it’s only practiced for a few minutes. With each consecutive teaching session, gradually more minutes are added until we have reached 15 to 20 minutes by the end.

Primary literature used for the lessons

- Gunaratana, Bhante Henepola (2019a). *Mindfulness in Plain English*. Somerville: Wisdom Publications.
- Kabat-Zinn, Jon (2013). *Full Catastrophe Living. Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Ott, Ulrich (2015). *Meditation für Skeptiker. Ein Neurowissenschaftler erklärt den Weg zum Selbst*. München: Droemer Knauer.
- Ricard, Matthieu (2015c). *The Art of Meditation*. London: Atlantic Books.



AdB
18.5.19

The mind thinks,
but we are not the mind.

Mantra Meditation “Maranatha”

While nearly half of the class participants prefer breathing meditation, almost a third of the participants find it easier to meditate with the help of a mantra (“Maranatha”). By this means, they are not so preoccupied with emerging thoughts and more easily enter a state of stillness.⁵ With the introduction of another mantra, “So’ham” (see p. 107), in the 2019 summer semester, there was an increase in the number of participants who prefer to use a mantra.

The term “mantra” originates from Sanskrit and refers to a sacred syllable, word or verse as the “sound body” of a spiritual force that is manifested through its recitation (loud, soft or silent, inwardly). The repetition of the mantra provides a focus point and serves to align the mind.⁶

The use of mantras is an ages-long tradition in both Hinduism and Buddhism, and has been practiced for thousands of years. There are also mantras from the Christian tradition, such as the mantra “Maranatha”, which we have used in our classes. It’s an early

Christian mantra and derives from Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke. It was mainly through the work of the Catholic priest and Benedictine monk John Main (1926-1982) that use of this mantra in prayer and meditation came to be known. While working as a civil servant for the British Colonial Service in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, he met Swami Satyananda (1923-2009), who introduced him to the practice of meditation using the mantra “Maranatha”. Main subsequently spread this approach among Christian circles. From this, Christian meditation groups emerged who eventually joined together to form the World Communion for Christian Meditation (WCCM).⁷

“In meditation our way forward to this growing awareness of the Spirit praying within us lies simply in our deepening fidelity to the saying of the mantra. It is the faithful repetition of our word that integrates our whole being. It does so because it brings us to the silence, the concentration, the necessary level of consciousness that enable us to open our mind and heart to the work of the love of God in the depth of our being.”⁸

The word stands for several meanings: “Our Lord has Come” (Maranatha) or “Our Lord will come” or – most likely – “Come Lord. Come Lord Jesus.”⁹

Other possible meanings are “Jesus be with me” or “I invoke the divine in me”. This latter translation is particularly suitable for people who don’t directly identify with the Christian faith.

In this exercise, students can decide for themselves which translation for the mantra “Maranatha” they find most suitable.

Instructions

The singing bowl is struck once

Sitting relaxed and upright

You can put your hands in your lap or on your thighs

The eyes are closed and completely relaxed

Breathe in and out, consciously and calmly. The breath comes and goes by itself, in a completely relaxed manner.

Now, inwardly, you can speak the mantra

As you say it to yourself, you can divide the mantra into four syllables:

MA – RA – NA – THA.

Pronounce the mantra inwardly and listen to the inner sound.

The breath flows naturally. You can also connect the breath more consciously with the utterance of the mantra. For example upon the inhale you say MARANATHA, but when you exhale you don’t say it, remaining in silence. Or you inhale with the first two syllables MA-RA and exhale with the syllables NA-THA.¹⁰ It is important that the rhythm remains fluent and natural and is not done mechanically.

At the end, the singing bowl is struck 3 times

As for the length of time needed for regular meditation practice, John Main suggests at least twenty minutes, but twenty-five or thirty minutes, per meditation session is better.¹¹

Primary literature used for the lessons

- Main, John (2014). *Word into Silence. A manual for Christian meditation*. Norwich: Canterbury Press.
- Main, John (2011). *The Way of Unknowing. Expanding spiritual horizons through meditation*. Norwich: Canterbury Press.
- Ware, Kallistos / Jungclaussen, Emmanuel (2004). *Hinführung zum Herzensgebet*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Verlag Herder.

The highest meditation is the state of complete inner stillness. In that state, not a single thought arises in the mind. However, most people cannot attain this state of stillness right away. For that reason, it is of the greatest importance for a meditator to understand how to deal with the mind.

Swami Muktananda (1908-1982)

Focusing on a point between the eyebrows

Another form of meditation is the focusing on a point between the eyebrows.

Instructions

The singing bowl is struck once

Relax and close your eyes
 Focus your attention on a point between the eyebrows
 Remain completely relaxed, there's no pressure
 Don't look inwardly at this spot
 The alignment is mental

Be relaxed, but attentive and present

The singing bowl is struck once, from time to time

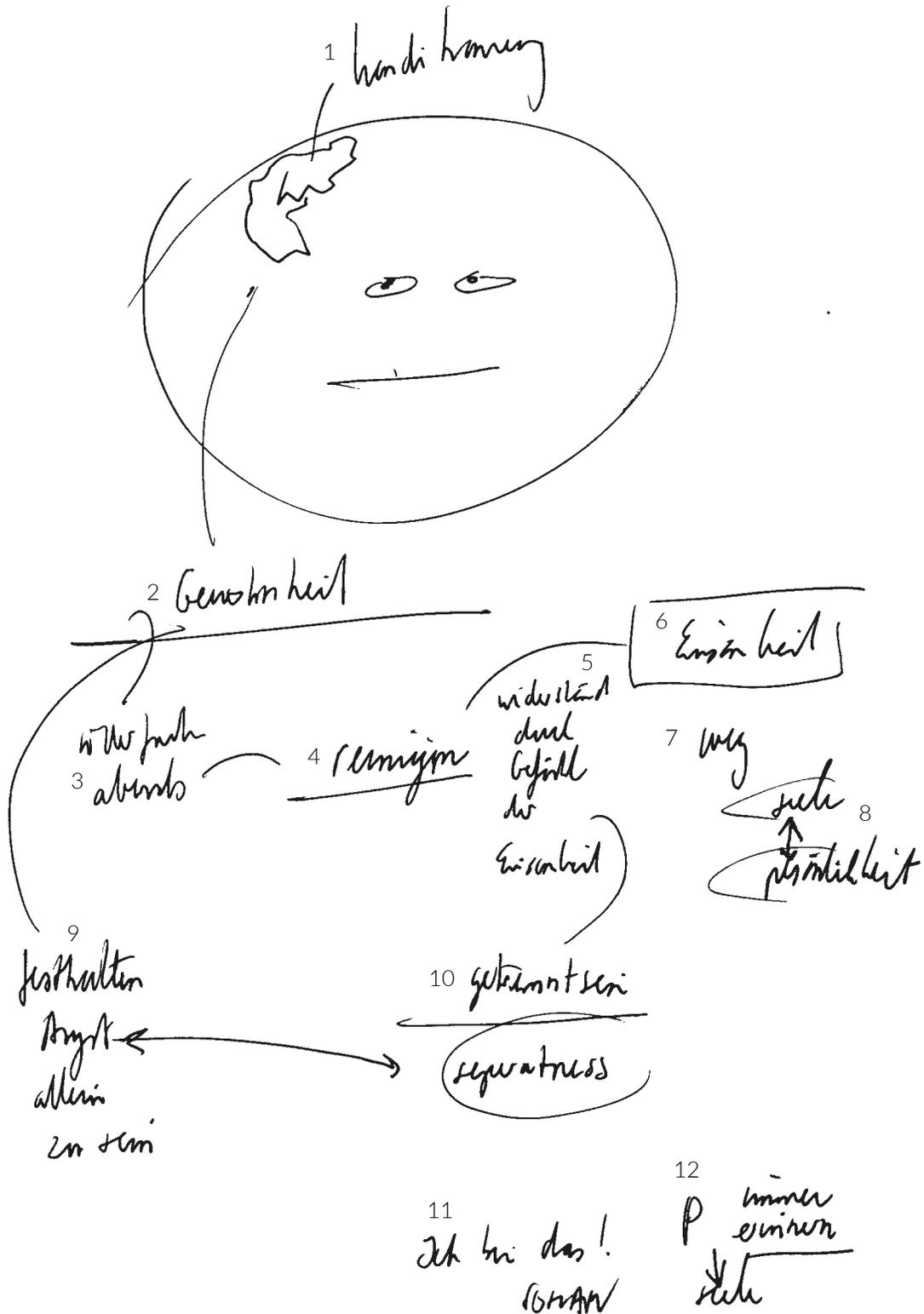
Now and then say: "keep the focus between your eyebrows"

At the end, the singing bowl is struck 3 times

Primary literature used for the lessons

No primary literature was referenced in this teaching module.

We are conditioned, but we can also free ourselves from this.



¹ conditioning | ² habit | ³ early in the morning, evenings | ⁴ cleaning | ⁵ resistance due to feelings of loneliness | ⁶ loneliness | ⁷ way | ⁸ soul, personality | ⁹ holding on, fear of being alone | ¹⁰ separateness | ¹¹ I am that! So'ham | ¹² P, soul, always remember

Mantra meditation “So’ham” / “I am That”

One form that was added to the curriculum much later – and therefore rarely appears in the student’s meditation journal notes to date, is meditation with the mantra “So’ham”, one of the main mantras of the Siddha Yoga tradition and means “I am That.”¹²

“*So’ham* is the natural mantra, the mantra of the Self. It does not belong to the East or the West or to any religion. *So’ham* is inherent in all of us; it repeats itself continually, along with our breathing. [...] The breath goes out with the sound *so* and comes in with the sound *ham*. Every time the breath goes out and comes in, one repetition of the *So’ham* mantra takes place.”¹³ It is also important to pay attention to the moments of silence that occur during breathing. “Between the inhalation and the exhalation, and between the exhalation and the inhalation, there is a fraction of a second which is absolutely still and free of thought. That space is the space of the Truth. When you breathe in and out, listening to *ham* and *so*, you should focus on that space for as long as it lasts. As you practice the technique, the space will gradually expand.”¹⁴

This mantra meditation was made popular in the West primarily by the Indian spiritual teacher Swami Muktananda (1908-1982), and his teachings are passed on today by his successor Swami Chidvilasananda.

Instructions

Strike the singing bowl once

Sit upright but relaxed, eyes closed

Breathe in and out consciously and calmly.

The breath comes and goes by itself. Completely relaxed.

Now silently repeat the mantra

On the exhale *So*, on the inhale *Ham*.

Let the sound *So* flow out with the breath.

Let the sound *Ham* flow in with the breath.

Pay attention also to the moments of silence and stillness between exhaling and inhaling and inhaling and exhaling.

Strike the singing bowl from time to time

From time to time repeat: “On the exhale *So*, on the inhale *Ham*”.

To signal the end of the exercise, strike the singing bowl 3 times

Primary literature used for the lessons

Chidvilasananda, Swami (Gurumayi) (1995). *Inner Treasures*. South Fallsburg: SYDA Foundation.

Muktananda, Swami (1999). *Meditate. Happiness Lies Within You*. South Fallsburg: SYDA Foundation.

Muktananda, Swami (1989). *Where Are You Going? A Guide to the Spiritual Journey*. South Fallsburg: SYDA Foundation.

Beyond thoughts

Here follows an exercise from the teachings of Nisargadatta Maharaj (1897-1981), introduced by his long-time student and the founder of quantum psychology, Stephen H. Wolinsky, Ph.D., in the film *I am that I am. Experience the teachings of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj*.¹⁵

Instructions

(Original text Stephen H. Wolinsky, Ph.D.)

The singing bowl is struck once, if desired

What is the “I am”?

To give you an experience of what the “I am” is, I want to ask you as the listener to “let your eyes close for a moment.”

Without using your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations or perceptions, are you a man, a woman or neither?

If you do not use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations or perceptions, are you defined, undefined or neither?

Without using your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations or perceptions, are you limited, unlimited or neither?

If you do not use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations or perceptions, are you in a body, out a body, or neither?

When you do not use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations or perceptions, notice the no-state state of the “I am”. Without thoughts, memories, emotions, associations or perceptions.

In a moment I will ask you to open your eyes, just come back to the room a part of your awareness back there in the no-state state, without thoughts, memory, emotions, associations and perceptions.

And when you let your eyes open, a part of your awareness can be back here in the room, so you are splitting your awareness in two directions.

Maharaj spoke about the “I am” in terms of the verbal “I am” and the non-verbal “I am”. For example: the verbal “I am” would be “I am good. I am bad. I am smart. I’m stupid, or whatever!”

He said, cut that out first and just stick with the “I am”; let go of “bad, good, whatever shows up and just stick with the verbal ‘I am’.”

Without your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations or perceptions, you have what he would have called the non-verbal “I am”.

Let’s go over it again.

Let your eyes close for a moment.

If you do not use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations or perceptions, are you perfect, imperfect or neither?

If you don't use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations or perceptions, what does the word perfect or imperfect even mean?

If you do not use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations or perceptions, are you worthy or unworthy or neither?

If you do not use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations or perceptions, what does worthy or unworthy even mean?

If you do not use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations, or perceptions, are you alone, connected, or neither?

If you do not use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations, or perceptions, what does alone or connection even mean?

When you do not use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations, or perceptions, are you powerful, powerless, or neither?

If you do not use your thoughts, memory, emotions, associations, or perceptions, what does powerful or powerless even mean?

Slowly we open our eyes again ...

The singing bowl is struck 3 times, if desired

After a short moment of silence, a reflective conversation can now follow, to discuss how the participants experienced the exercise. First in groups of two, then in the entire group session.

Nisardgadatta Maharaj repeatedly said that everything you know about yourself comes from the outside and is defined, and therefore advocated that one take the path inside to meet one's own true Self.

A student, in tears, once remarked after the exercise that during it she suddenly experienced how much she had allowed herself be influenced by others thus far in her life, through so many external opinions, ie: how she should look, how she should behave or what she should later become.

I once did this exercise as part of a seminar for managers. Answering my question as to how the participants experienced the exercise, one sitting next to me remarked, "It was completely silent." He was so deeply impressed by that moment that he subsequently said almost nothing during the entire seminar. Some students are also impressed and pleasantly surprised that they are able to go beyond their thoughts, even for a short moment.

Primary literature used for the lessons

- Maharshi, Ramana (2011). *“Wer bin ich?” Der Übungsweg der Selbstergründung.* Norderstedt: BoD.
- Nisargadatta Maharaj (2014). *Beyond Freedom. Talks with Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj.* Mumbai: YogiImpressions.
- Nisargadatta, Maharaj (2009). *I Am That. Talks with Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj.* Durham: The Acorn Press.
- Wolinsky, Stephen H. (2000). *I Am at I Am. A Tribute to Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj.* Capitola (CA): Quantum Institute.

DVD

- Wolinsky, Stephen H. (2009). *I Am That I Am. Experience the Teachings of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj – Part 1.* Stuttgart: Mouna GmbH.

Internet

- Kornfield, Jack (2014). “Jack Kornfield on Nisargadatta Maharaj (2)”, www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXuF8qmv5Nc (accessed September 13, 2020)
- Wolinsky, Stephen H. (2010). “Nisargadatta Maharaj / Experiential Meditation”, www.youtube.com/watch?v=rE6kS7vVsXw (accessed September 13, 2020)

¹ Cf. Gunaratana 2019a, p. 23 f. and p. 119.

² Gunaratana 2019a, p. 92; An introduction to Vipassana meditation is given by Gunaratana, 2019a.

³ A brief description of breathing meditation exercises can be found in Ricard 2015c, p. 75 ff; Ott 2015, p. 49 ff. and Kabat-Zinn 2013, p. 39 ff. For short forms of meditation in connection with breath, see also text module Sutras, p. 159 ff.

⁴ Cf. Gunaratana 2019a, p. 110 f.

⁵ Cf. Main 2014, p. 14 f.

⁶ See Devananda 1981, p. 44 f.; “The root ‘man’ in the word Mantra comes from the first syllable of that word meaning ‘to think’ and ‘tra’ from ‘tra’ meaning ‘to protect or free’ from the bondage of the phenomenal world. A Mantra generates the creative force and bestows eternal Bliss. A Mantra when constantly repeated awakens the consciousness.” (Swami Sivananda in Devananda 1981, p. 44)

⁷ See Main 2014, p. 84 f.; see also the website: www.wccm.org.

⁸ Main 2014, p. 12 f.

⁹ Main 2014, p. 10; see also Main 2011, p. 107.

¹⁰ Cf. Main 2014, p. 12 f.; see also Main 2011, p. 28 f. and p. 108.

¹¹ Cf. Main 2014, p. 11.

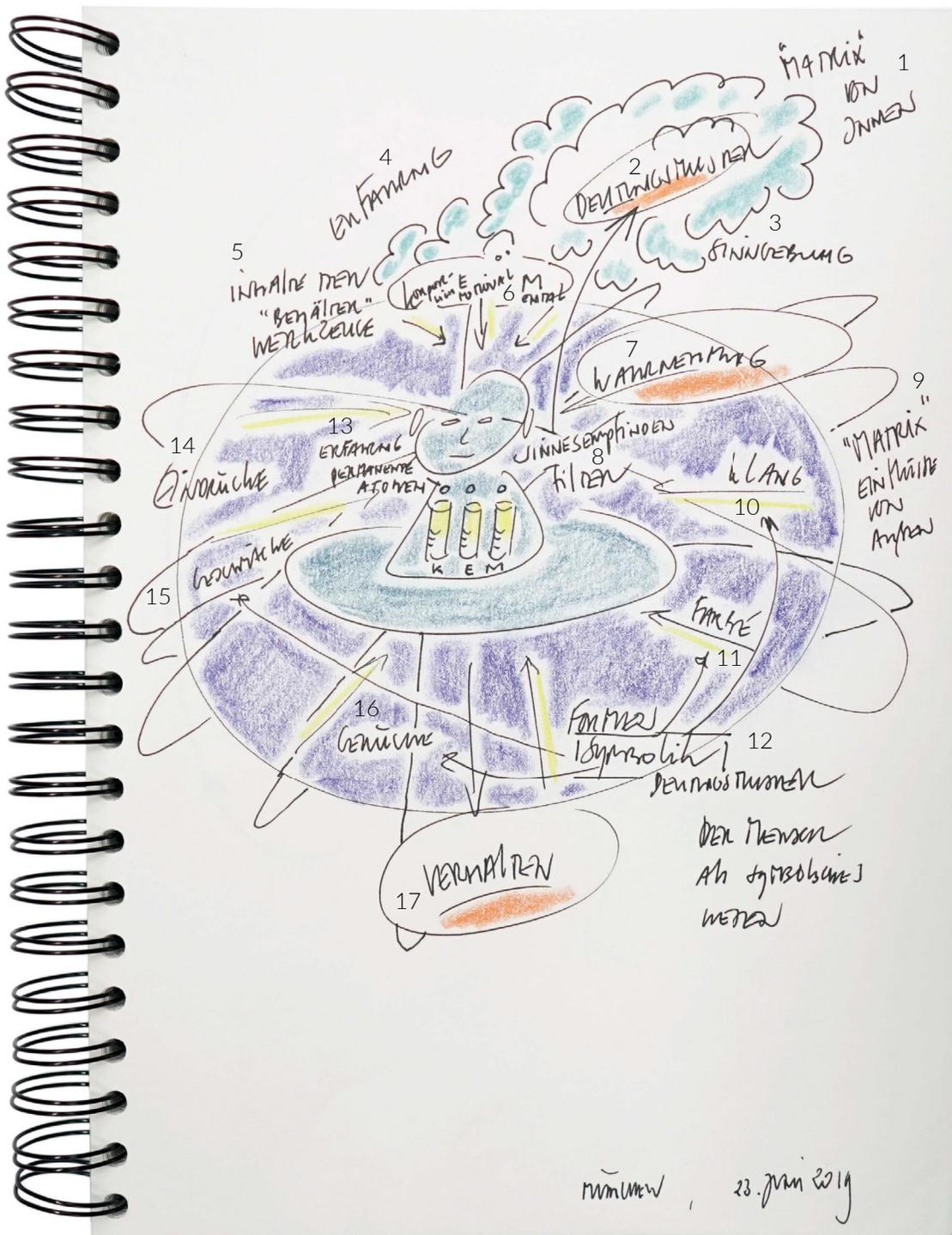
¹² Muktananda 1989, p. 98 as well as p. 131 and p. 200. See also Chidvilasananda 1995, p. 71; “*Ham*, the syllable that comes in with the inhalation, is the supreme ‘I’-consciousness, the perfect ‘I am’, which is God. So the syllable that goes out with the exhalation, is God’s power, Shakti, which takes the form of the universe.” (Muktananda 1989, p. 99)

¹³ Muktananda 1989, p. 98. Here one also finds a guide to the practice of So’ham.

¹⁴ Muktananda 1989, 99 f.

¹⁵ See the film: *I Am That I Am. Experience the Teachings of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj – Part 1* (2009, 7:33-16:39 min.). See as well: Wolinsky, Stephen H. (2010). “Nisargadatta Maharaj / Experiential Meditation”, www.youtube.com/watch?v=rE6kS7vVsXw (accessed September 13, 2020). This exercise is reprinted with the kind permission of Stephen H. Wolinsky, Ph.D.

Influences that condition us.



¹ inner matrix | ² PATTERNS OF INTERPRETATION | ³ meaning | ⁴ experience | ⁵ contents of the "container" vehicles | ⁶ body, emotional, mental | ⁷ PERCEPTION | ⁸ sensory perception; filter | ⁹ "Matrix" influences from the outside | ¹⁰ sound | ¹¹ color | ¹² shapes; symbolism; thought patterns; man as a symbolic being | ¹³ experience; permanent atoms | ¹⁴ impressions | ¹⁵ tastes | ¹⁶ smells | ¹⁷ BEHAVIOUR

26.5.2019: Sitzmeditation

Ich habe nach dem Aufstehen 10 Minuten eine Meditation im Sitzen durchgeführt. Es hat mir sehr geholfen meine Gedanken zu ordnen und mit einem klaren Kopf in den Tag zu starten.

30.5.2019: Geräuschmeditation

Ich war in den Bergen beim Wandern und habe bei einem Stop auf dem Gipfel versucht meine Umwelt und vor allem die Geräusche bewusst und achtsam wahrzunehmen. Es war eine schöne Erfahrung diesen Moment ein wenig mehr zu schätzen und wahrzunehmen als ich es normalerweise getan hätte. Für diese Übung habe ich mir ungefähr 5 Minuten Zeit genommen.

3.5.2019: Sitzmeditation

Ich habe die Meditation nach dem Nachtdienst für 15 Minuten durchgeführt, um meinen Kopf von den vielen Gedanken und Eindrücken der Arbeit freizubekommen. Dies ist mir gut gelungen und hat mir geholfen danach besser zu schlafen.

10.07.17 16:40 → ca. 25 min.: Ashna

Meditationsraum UHG - Meditationskissen

Ich meditiere gerne mit den Meditationskissen. Da hat mein automatisch eine aufrechte Haltung während den Meditationen. Also versuchte ich in einen bequemen Sitz zu kommen und dann erlaube die Klangschale. Ich hörte dem Klang der Schale lange nach, dann richtete ich meine Sinne nach innen. Ich konzentrierte mich auf mein drittes Auge. Ich stellte mir vor, wie von dem Auge ein helles Licht durch meinen ganzen Körper leuchtet. Irgendwann im Laufe der Übung schwirren mir ein paar Gedanken durch den Kopf und ich spürte wie taub mein rechter Unterschenkel war. Ich bewegte ihn und merkte, dass er eingeschlafen war. Zum Glück ertönte die Klangschale dreimal. Ich löste meine Sitzposition und lockerte das Bein. Bis auf das Ende der Übung konnte ich aber ganz gut meditieren.

11.07.17 15:00 → ca. 30 min.: Mantra

Matte - im Garten bei mir zuhause

Es gibt Tage, da gelingt einem gar nichts. Es gibt Tage, da stelle ich mich und mein aktuelles Tun in Frage. Solche Selbstzweifel habe ich oft vor Prüfungssituationen. Da stehe ich sozusagen neben mir. Dieser Dienstag war genau so ein Tag. Ich war negativ gestimmt. Deshalb nahm ich mir eine Auszeit, legte mich auf unsere Terrasse auf eine Matte auf den Rücken. Ich schloss meine Augen und sagte mir immer "Ich liebe mich" vor meinem inneren Geiste. Am Anfang war es schwer, das so immer wieder zu denken, aber nach einer Zeit kullerten leise Tränen über meine Gesicht und allmählich breitete sich ein warmes Gefühl in mir aus. Die Übung tat mir wirklich gut, da ich mir Zeit nahm und auch mal meine Seele weinen ließ und ihr zuhörte.

Journal Notes

Sitting Meditations

A. B.

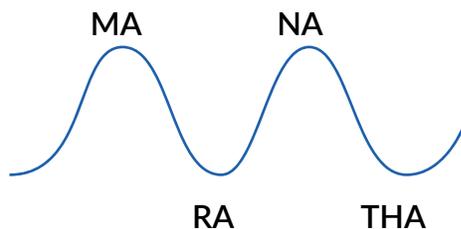
Time: 2:15–3:45 p.m. (10+5+5 minutes)

Place: Meditation room of the KHG (sitting)

Method: MA-RA-NA-THA, deep contemplation, first aid for difficult thoughts

Utensils: singing bowl, thought: “waves”, CD

At the beginning of our session today we meditated for 10 minutes each in our own way. I was able to get my head free of thoughts, and I thought only twice very briefly about food and the sounds from outside in the form of birdsong and street noise. I also noticed the smell in the meditation room very strongly. It smelled like the mats we were sitting on. I had never really noticed this smell before. As I recited the mantra to myself, I thought of waves going up as I inhaled and down as I exhaled.



After the meditation we did two smaller exercises from the CD from the meditation book for children. The exercises were totally unsuitable for me because the speaker spoke too fast and I didn't have time to think clearly.

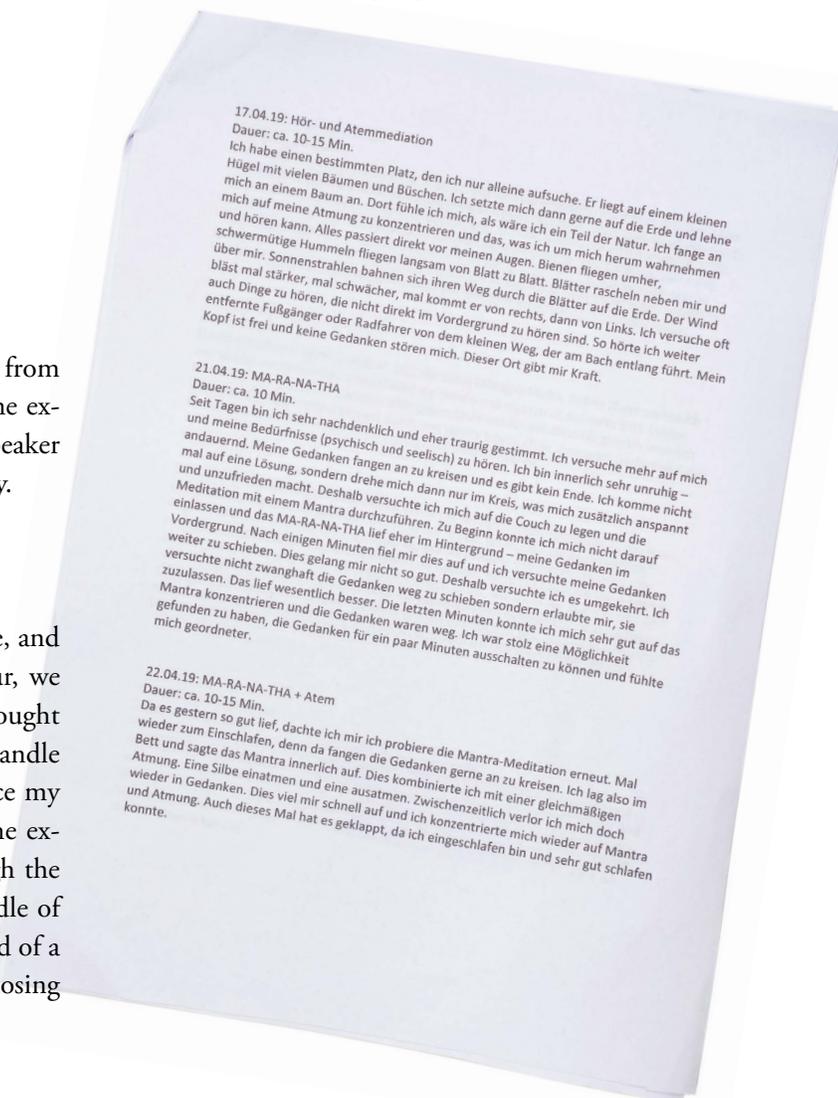
A. v. W.

10/24/19–10/30/19

I asked my mother if she'd like to meditate with me, and she agreed. In the afternoon, around half past four, we sat down on blankets on the living room floor. I thought it would be nice to light a candle. We placed the candle in the middle, between us on the coffee table. Since my mother had never meditated before, I explained the exercise to her by concentrating on breathing through the nose. I myself concentrated on a point in the middle of my forehead. We meditated for five minutes. Instead of a singing bowl, I simply said, “We will now begin, closing our eyes.”

When I asked my mother how it had been for her, she said that at the beginning it was hard for her to think of nothing, and therefore she often [thought] “think of nothing”. But towards the end she concentrated exclusively on her breathing, paying more attention to the chest area.

It went quite well for me, but I think I was a bit excited because I thought several times about how it was for my mother. Maybe I just wasn't calm and composed. Before that, we had coffee and went for a walk, which is why I might not have been able to completely relax. In any case, I found myself thinking about my mother several times. I could imagine that some students think about their classmates while meditating together in class.



C. M.**5/26/19 – sitting meditation**

After getting up, I did a meditation for 10 minutes while sitting down. It helped me to organize my thoughts very well and to start the day with a clear head.

5/3/19 – sitting meditation

I did the meditation after the night shift for 15 minutes, to clear my head from the many thoughts and impressions from work. This worked well for me and helped me to sleep better afterwards.

F. E.

I actually like the Breathing Meditation best, because it is the easiest to do and can be applied anywhere (bus, train, bicycle, walking ...). It can also be done quickly in between [activities], so that you can switch off for a moment and then concentrate on one thing again. Sometimes it's hard not to pay attention to your thoughts, so I find it easier to meditate in the evening when you've already finished the day to some extent, than earlier in the day when you think about all the things you might be doing or need to do.

I have also practiced the Ajna center meditation several times [...]. As a mantra, instead of MA-RA-NA-THA, I have always thought up my own motivational sayings, which I have said to myself, for example: "Today is a beautiful day", "I can do everything I want to do today". This was then internalized, and these days went really well!

F. S.**4/21/19, MA-RA-NA-THA****Duration: approx. 10 min.**

For days I have been very pensive and rather sad. I try to listen more to myself and my needs (psychologically and emotionally). I am very restless inside all the time. My thoughts begin to circle and there's no end [to them]. I can't even find a solution, so then I just go round in circles, which makes me more tense and dissatisfied.

So I tried to lie down on the couch and do the meditation with a mantra. In the beginning I couldn't get into it, and the MA-RA-NA-THA ran just in the background with my thoughts in the foreground. After a few minutes I noticed this and I tried to push my thoughts further away. I didn't succeed very well. So I tried it the other way 'round. I no longer tried to compulsively push the thoughts away, but allowed myself to let them be. That went much better.

In the final minutes I was able to concentrate very well on the mantra and the thoughts were gone. I was proud to have found a way to switch off the thoughts for a few minutes and felt more self-composed.

4/22/19, MA-RA-NA-THA + breath**Duration: approx. 10–15 min.**

Since it went so well yesterday, I thought I'd again try the mantra meditation to fall asleep, because that's when the thoughts like to start circling. So I lay in bed and said the mantra inside. I combined this with a steady breathing. Inhaling on one syllable and exhaling on one. In the meantime I lost myself in thought again. I noticed this quickly and concentrated again on the mantra and breathing. This time it also worked, because I fell asleep and was able to sleep very well.

L. K. M.

For 10 minutes I meditated on a bench at the Nordfriedhof. I used the breathing meditation and concentrated on my nostrils. At the beginning of the meditation I digressed – I noticed that I tried to use the free time to order my thoughts. With time, however, I was more successful in letting my thoughts pass.

In retrospect, I noticed that I concentrated less on breathing and more on the sounds of nature (the chirping, rustling) around me. Before that I went to the cemetery to jog. Therefore I felt strained going into meditation. Afterwards I had a very pleasant feeling and realized that I was calm and relaxed.

I sat down in my room for 10 minutes and closed the door behind me. This time I concentrated on the Mantra MA-RA-NA-THA. I succeeded in doing this at the beginning of the meditation as well. I was able to imagine the word before my eyes and concentrate on it. In the course of the meditation, however, I digressed again and again. I noticed how I used the time of rest to order my thoughts and to calm down. For the next meditation, I therefore decided to plan fixed times for meditation at the beginning of the week, so that I don't feel that I'm otherwise lacking the time.

besser meine Gedanken vorbeiziehen zu lassen. Im Dachhinein fiel mir auf, dass ich mich weniger auf die Atmung, sondern auf die Naturgeräusche (das Zwitschern, Rascheln) um mich herum konzentriere. Zuvor war ich zum Beginn auf dem Friedhof. Deshalb ging ich angestrengt in die Meditation. Im Anschluss habe ich ein sehr wichtiges Gefühl und merkte, dass ich ruhig und entspannt

Ich habe  mich für 10min in mein Zimmer gesetzt und die Tür hinter mir geschlossen. Dieses mal habe ich mich auf das mantra "ta-ta-ta" konzentriert. Dies gelang mir zu Beginn der Meditation gut. Ich konnte mir das Wort vor meinen Augen vorstellen und mich so darauf konzentrieren. Im Verlauf der Meditation schweifte ich allerdings immer wieder ab. Ich

die Zeit der Ruhe nutze um meine Gedanken zu ordnen und ruhe zu kommen. Für die nächste Meditation nahm ich nur deshalb vor, schon bei Wutbeginn eine Übung für die Meditation einzubauen, so dass ich nicht das Gefühl habe, dass mir die Zeit an einer anderen Stelle fehlt.

 Ich sitze in meinem Zimmer auf dem Boden auf einer Decke. Als Hilfsmittel nutze ich außerdem meinen Handywecker, den ich auf 10min einstelle. Ich mache eine Atemmeditation machen. Ich merkte jedoch schon nach kurzer Zeit, dass ich abschweifte und mich nicht konzentrieren kam. Da ich starke Kopfschmerzen habe, fange ich an mich auf den

 Für 10min habe ich auf einer Bank auf dem Nordfriedhof meditiert. Dabei habe ich die Atemmeditation angewendet und mich auf meine Nasenflügel konzentriert. Zu Beginn der Meditation schweifte ich ab - ich merkte, dass ich die freie Zeit zu nutzen versuchte, eine Gedanken zu machen. Mit der Zeit gelang es mir jedoch

L. R.**7/11/17, 3:00–3:30 p.m., Mantra****Mat in the garden at my home**

There are days when nothing succeeds at all. There are days when I question myself and my current actions. I often have such self-doubt before exam situations. There I stand beside myself, so to speak. This Tuesday was just such a day. I was in a negative mood. That's why I took some time off and lay down on my back on a mat on our terrace. I closed my eyes and continuously told myself "I love me" in front of my inner spirit. In the beginning it was hard to keep thinking it over and over again, but after a while soft tears rolled down my face and gradually a warm feeling spread inside me. The exercise was really good for me, because I took my time and sometimes I let my soul cry and listened to it.

M. N.**4/12/19****Duration approx. 30 min. in total**

At the end of the week I took a lot of time to meditate. First I started with the breathing meditation, but I got tired quickly and after about 5 minutes I fell asleep for a few seconds.

Afterwards it was clear to me: even if I'm tired, I should meditate with a mantram. So I continued with "Maranatha", which helped me to relax without falling asleep. I noticed how I became more relaxed and the thoughts came down on me like a sprinkle of rain, grazing me slightly but never quite hitting me.

P. S.**12/17/16, about 10 minutes, at my home****Result: sitting meditation (mantra)**

I felt totally tired and indecisive today. I still had so many thoughts in my head about presents for Christmas. Who should I give presents to? How should I wrap the presents? What is still missing? I took another 10 minutes and withdrew from everyday life. The mantra is somehow stored in my subconscious, so I can recall it relatively quickly. The rhythm of speaking the individual syllables is also balancing. The individual syllables appear before my eyes as if I were singing karaoke. As I hoped, the minutes (a little time out) did me good and I was then able to wrap the remaining presents.

