

*In ignorance, I am something; in understanding, I am nothing; in love,
I am everything.*

~Rupert Spira

This is probably the most difficult way of observing yourself, and is also the most fraught with misunderstanding and spiritual dangers.

Meditation is about being immediately present to your own inner condition and experience, with complete acceptance and non-judgment. And it is the inner condition of suffering that has to be witnessed first and foremost. This is a practice that should be occurring all day, every day, no matter what you are doing or not doing. It should be a way of life. Until it is, we practice and maybe even set aside a specific time to do so.

In order to pay attention to our suffering we need to define what this is.

And so, what is suffering? Suffering is all the ways in which your needs, as children were not met or were overly met. This resulted in the emotional experiences of pain, fear and shame, that live on in you in. It is the very fabric and blueprint of the way in which you experience life.

What was also introjected or internalized, were all the beliefs inherent in childhood needs not being met. Beliefs about worthlessness, blame and unlovability that become the blueprint for ways of coping or defenses.

We learned ways of escaping our suffering feelings, by either, complying or rebelling, being passive or aggressive, of being victim or perpetrator, of striving or avoiding, in all kinds of subtle and not so subtle ways, in thought and behavior. This is what is referred to as EGO. The part of us that tries to get needs met from others through misunderstanding and behaviors that bring immediate relief, but long term destruction to ourselves and others. It is what our SOUL, identified with at a very young age, and thought of self, which is why it is referred to as the false self. You are a SOUL, not an ego – ego is your animal response to pain. And it is complicated by a very crafty and advanced brain. Instead of just running or fighting like a more primitive animal, we have learned to do this in our mind in hugely complex ways.

It is this belief system and behavioral response that we have identified with as our personality or ego. Our defenses are ways of not being aware of the feelings buried underneath. Now we live in a split state. Emotional needs and feelings buried in our physiology and defended against by walls and barriers of thought and defensive behavior. We are now split into two instead of being One.

So, the feelings and needs of the young soul are repressed and denied and kept in unawareness. However, experience lives in us as cellular memory and is activated by events in your current life and relationships. Anything that remotely reminds us of the original ways in which our needs were not met, will activate all the feelings, beliefs and defenses we had as children. In other words, we are collapsing into and living in emotional and cognitive memory unless we can witness it with awareness. **Hence the practice of meditation.**

If we do not understand how all of this developed, then we do not know what to see and to what we need to pay attention, in our sitting meditation. Before we can even do meditation, we have to have a map and understanding of the inner dynamics and structure of ego development within, so that we can understand whatever is arising within us as memory and *of what it is we are being required to get aware*. For a more detailed map of ego functioning read more here.....

Secondly, deciding on a time every day means you are probably sitting quietly with no immediate triggers occurring, so you do not have anything on which to reflect to gain a deeper understanding. Meditation is **not** a way of avoiding or escaping the work. It is not trancing out into some dissociative state. It is not imagining the light. It is not pretending there are no issues.

If there have been no recent triggers it is easy to trance out and think you have reached some kind of enlightened state of consciousness. This is not true and constitutes an attempt to spiritually by-pass the hard work that is required of digging very deep and getting a full understanding of how a trigger activates the memory of emotion, old belief systems connected to the emotions, as well as the defenses one learned as a child, to protect oneself from the intolerable emotional suffering of the child you were when your needs were not met or were overly met.

On the other hand, if you sit in a state of agitation with no map or understanding of how to analyze and understand the emotional experience you are remembering, you are just collapsing and spinning in suffering.

To realize that one is the observer of the experience, is to get a small degree of freedom from just mindlessly re-living the memory of the experience in the present moment. Who you ARE, which is the non-anxious, compassionate, wise present consciousness, has identified with the suffering and You now think that is what you are. This is a false identification that happens quite naturally in childhood. Now is the time to WAKE UP and realize **you are** the observer of experience, not the experience.

The observer has to be able to see very deeply into the tangled knot of emotion, need, belief, and defense with complete clarity and understanding as well as compassion. In other words, the observer is required to be wise and compassionate to whatever arises within. Another simple way of saying this is, that the observer must be understanding and empathic. The observer must be able to be firm and kind.

The inner experiences of suffering require both limits and acceptance, loving discipline and correction. But not judgement. And here-in lies another huge problem. Very few people have matured enough to even know how to relate to old inner childhood memory states, in a way that is both firm and loving. The inner relationship of parent to child, disciple and leader cannot be established, because loving relationship has actually never been experienced in a consistent and stable way. We live in a state of ignorance.

Meditation without knowledge of the map of human development, the evolution of consciousness, the difference between defensive living and loving relationship, is doomed

to failure and practice is very demotivating if you do not understand the purpose and actual practice.

It is true that there is no possibility of freedom without examining the bars of the prison and knowing a way out. A map and a plan are required.

The very first understanding that is required to do the practice of meditation is this:

What you are required to meditate on first and foremost is your suffering. You must become aware and knowledgeable about suffering, how it is created in your and what the nature of the problem is.

That it is only through com-compassion, being the witness that suffers with these memory experiences, that we expand our true Self and can begin to experience more expanded states of joy, peace and love.

Remembering that you ARE already the joy, peace and love that you seek. To remember that is to be able to bring it to your fears and shame in loving relationship and acceptance.

Meditation is about CREATING LOVING RELATIONSHIP with EVERY stage and state within your being. It is NOT about getting rid of anything, judging anything or denying anything. It is radical acceptance of Life.

Actually itting might or might not be useful. But doing the practice every day, all day, **will** expand your awareness. And this is what it is about. It is about becoming more aware, in every direction, so that your consciousness can embrace, eventually the whole world's suffering.