

LEWELLYN'S

--- COMPLETE BOOK OF ---
MEDITATION

About the Author

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MEDITATION

A Comprehensive Guide to Effective Techniques
for Calming Your Mind and Spirit

SHAI TUBALI

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Unlocking the 7 Secret Powers of the Heart

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Meditations

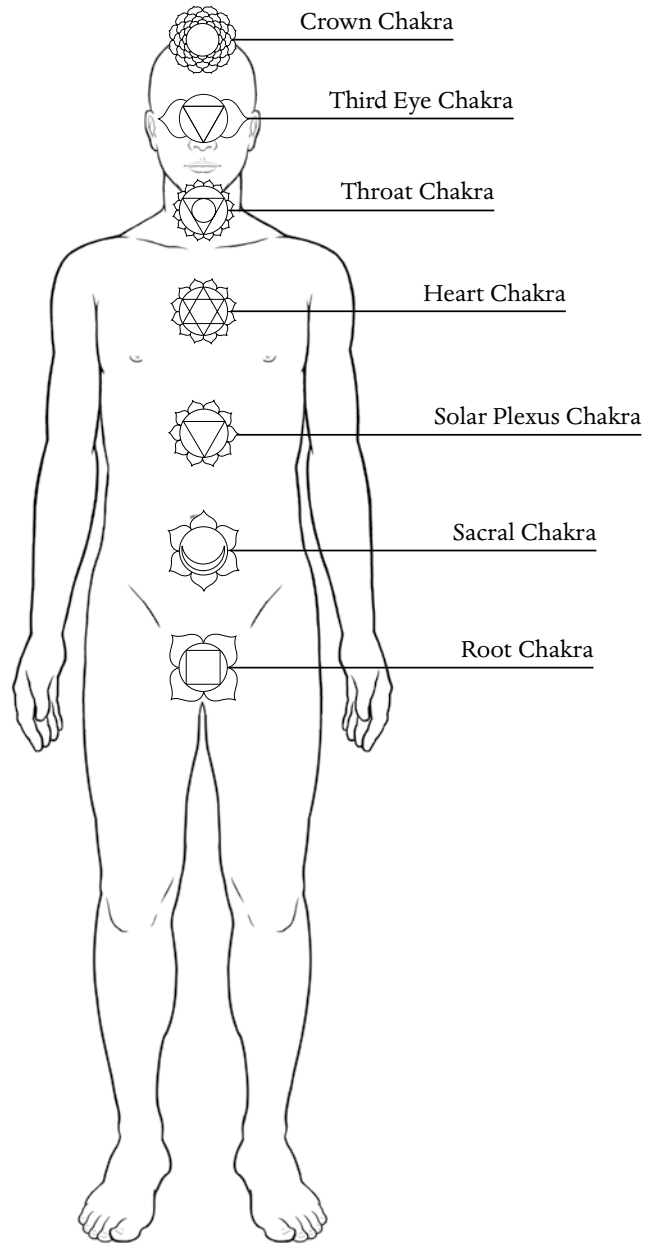
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Disclaimer

The information in this book is not intended to diagnose or treat any medical or emotional condition. The techniques in this book are simplified versions of complex systems of meditation. As such, if you wish to pursue these practices more thoroughly, seek the guidance of meditation experts.

Some postures and techniques are not advised for adults who are pregnant or have just given birth. If you are experiencing any medical conditions or are unsure if a pose or exercise is safe for you, consult your doctor. The author and publisher encourage you to consult a professional if you have any questions about the use or efficacy of the techniques or insights in this book.

Chakra Basics



Chakra Basics

CHAKRA	SANSKRIT NAME AND MEANING	LOCATION	ELEMENT	ASSOCIATED COLOR	SEED MANTRA	PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS	MEDITATIVE STATE
Root chakra	Muladhara ("root" or "foundation")	Inside the perineum; corresponds to the legs and the skeletal and muscular systems	Earth	Red	Lam	Instinct, earthly and biological existence, security, groundedness, physical foundation and health, fear of instability and change, trauma	Inner stability
Sacral chakra	Svadhithana ("one's dwelling place")	Lowest point of the spinal cord, at the level of the pubic bone; corresponds to the sex organs and the sacral plexus of nerves	Water	Orange/red	Vam	Feeling and impulse, vitality, adventure, totality, enjoyment, sensuality, pursuit of pleasure, sexuality, shame, the unconscious	Unconditional joy
Solar plexus chakra	Manipura ("city of jewels")	Behind the navel; corresponds to the digestive system and the solar plexus	Fire	Bright yellow	Ram	Willpower, individuality, independence, ambition, intensity, dynamism, courage, control, anger	True inner power; self-presence

CHAKRA	SANSKRIT NAME AND MEANING	LOCATION	ELEMENT	ASSOCIATED COLOR	SEED MANTRA	PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS	MEDITATIVE STATE
Heart chakra	Anahata ("unstruck" or "unbeaten")	Behind the base of the heart, at the level of the depression in the sternum; corresponds to the cardiac plexus of nerves	Air	Blue	Yam	Emotions, relationships, love, attachment and dependency, betrayal and disappointment, forgiveness, letting go	Unconditional love; unity consciousness
Throat chakra	Vishuddhi ("purity")	Behind the throat pit; corresponds to the cervical plexus of nerves	Ether	Violet	Ham	Communication, self-expression, leadership, manifestation, vision, authenticity, transparency	Boundless space
Brow chakra, also known as the third eye chakra or the guru chakra	Ajna ("command")	In the brain, behind the center of the eyebrows; corresponds to the pineal gland	Light	Silver/gray	Om	Intuition, intellect, clarity, insight, mental order, discrimination, attention, curiosity	Nondual perception
Crown chakra	Sahasrara ("one thousand")	Center of the top of the head, in the brain; corresponds to the pituitary gland	Cosmos; pure light and source of creation	Multicolored	Ah	Spirit, meditation, transcendence, timelessness, nonattachment, divine nature, universality	Unlimited consciousness

INTRODUCTION



Some time ago I met two high school students. They came to talk with me because they were enthusiastic about their newfound discovery of the world of meditation. As two excited young boys, they were filled with a sense of promise. We had an hour-long conversation, during which I asked them questions and vice versa. Near the end of our meeting I suggested, “Let’s just close our eyes for one moment now. Let’s tune in to the frequency of meditation itself, because we have been talking so much.”

One of them became alarmed. “But I have never meditated, really—I don’t know what to do.”

I replied, “There is no need for instructions. Let’s just be together for a moment.”

As we closed our eyes, a sense of presence permeated the room. It was just one moment, perhaps two minutes in time, and I quickly stopped it because I didn’t want to scare them or make things too intense. After we opened our eyes, both of them said that it felt as if everything had changed, as if nothing were as it was before.

This is the magic of meditation. It shifts you to a perspective that changes everything, and it does so extremely quickly. It adds something to your life, to your presence, to your sense of self-existence, to such a degree that as soon as you begin to get in touch with it, you don’t understand how you have lived your whole life without it—how you could manage at all without having this indispensable perspective.

In this sense, it is very important to understand that meditation—both the practice and the experience of the meditative state (we will explore the differences in chapter 1)—is not a luxury. Meditation is a deep human need, almost like the need for water, food, and good sleep. Of course, for as long as you don’t integrate it into your life, you will not be able to recognize that it is a need. Until then, you will imagine that you can do without it, that everything is fine, and that you are coping. But as soon as you imbibe the meditative fragrance into your lungs, mind, and being, you realize that your whole being has been thirsty for it, just as your body is thirsty for water.



Introduction

Even though meditation is a human need, and even though one minute of meditation can change everything and instantly make everything feel profound, meaningful, and full of presence, many people still don't integrate it into their lives.

There are countless reasons for this. I think one of the reasons is that most people don't fully understand what meditation is and why it is so important—what it can do for us. There is now plenty of research on the benefits of meditation. We know that, among other things, meditation can reduce stress and anxiety; it can help control pain, lengthen attention span, and reduce age-related memory loss; it can improve sleep and decrease blood pressure.¹ But still we don't understand what it is, why we need it, and how to do it. The latter point—how to do it—is, I believe, truly important: How can meditation be more than just a short-lived experience that disappears as soon as you open your eyes? How should we cope with the challenges of meditation? How can we love it rather than fight it? How can we *enjoy* it?

Throughout this introduction, I will partially answer some of these questions. But to fully answer them, a very comprehensive book is required! These are, after all, big questions; I hope you will have the patience for them.

In so many ways, meditation is like entering a committed relationship in your life. It is, first of all, a relationship with yourself. Second, it is a relationship between you and the universe, you and the invisible reality—but also between you and your thoughts and feelings, and between you and your true other half, the other part of yourself that you are usually unaware of. This relationship can be cultivated and grown. But, naturally, relationships have moments of fighting and disharmony. Instead of just running away, packing up our things, exclaiming, “I'm not doing this anymore!”, and slamming the door behind us, we need to know how to navigate challenging moments.

The Fifteen Purposes of Meditation

There is evidence of the existence of meditation as a position and practice dating back seven thousand years. Some archaeologists date meditation back to as early as 5000 BCE. This means that meditation has been with humans since the dawn of culture.² The earliest evidence comes from ancient India, where there are wall-art paintings of people sitting in a certain posture with half-closed eyes, obviously meditating. There it all started, with the tradition of sitting in caves and sending young students to forests, where there were schools of meditation.³

We don't know the exact nature of the earliest meditation techniques, but I can imagine the way they came into being. A meditation technique is something that is created quite acci-

1. Thorpe and Link, “12 Science-Based Benefits of Meditation.”

2. Ross, “How Meditation Went Mainstream.”

3. Easwaran, *The Upanishads*, 19.

dentally: someone finds themselves in an unexpected meditative state as a result of some kind of position, movement, action, or thought in their mind, and they become deeply relaxed and immersed in this beautiful state. Soon after, people approach them and ask, “How did you do it? I also want to be in that state!” So the meditator thinks, *How exactly did I do it?* Then they return to the specific thing they did and make a sort of metaphor out of it. Thus, the technique is imitating some internal or external gesture because it has succeeded for others, and it is gradually made into a system.

Another way meditation techniques may have come into being is simply by thinking of the meditative state metaphorically. If one of meditation’s attributes is that it is unchanging—a discovery of the unchanging in us—then why not create a physical metaphor for this unchanging nature? “Let’s remain perfectly motionless for one long hour—let’s be mountainlike!”

Not only do these techniques explain how meditation came into being, but they also explain the way preparatory techniques such as the yoga asanas (postures) were probably developed: people discovered for themselves that doing something could lead to the state of meditation, then made it into a structure, a form, something that other people could repeat. Did this repetition work for everyone? Not at all, because what worked for one person wouldn’t necessarily work for others. That is why we have plenty of meditations.

This can be considered the first purpose of meditation: imitating the meditative state, creating a repeated structure, in order to do the opposite. At first people reached a state as a result of doing something, then did that something in the hopes that it would lead them back to the state.

There are many other purposes of meditation. When I say “purposes,” I don’t mean benefits; benefits and purposes are two very different things. *Purpose* is what meditation can do, why it has been created, and what it can show or teach you. *Benefit*, on the other hand, is what you can get as a result of this teaching, as the outcome of achieving these goals. The Western world focuses greatly on benefits; meditation is mostly talked about in terms of what it can do for us. But here, I want to discuss purposes, since the benefits are just by-products. Yes, unintentionally, you sleep better, your concentration is far better, your decision-making is clearer, your joy in life is regained—but these are benefits, not purposes.

Let’s briefly explore the different purposes of meditation practice. Although I will present fifteen purposes here, I could come up with twenty or thirty, but I’ve chosen these fifteen because they are the major ones. These fifteen purposes may be enough to convince someone to start meditating, and they help us understand how many aspects the principle of meditation includes.

1. **Meditation brings us back to our original nature.** This is perhaps the most important purpose, and that is why it is listed first. Our original nature is what humans were at the beginning, as natural beings. Before we started to think in such complicated ways, we were simply a part of the cosmos, a part of life, like animals, plants, and stars. With the aid of meditation, we move back from the thinking self to this state of original, natural being.
2. **Meditation makes us complete.** When we enter meditation, we meet our other half. Sometimes we look for our other half in romantic relationships, but actually, our search for romantic partners in this psychological sense only happens because we don't have a sufficient acquaintance with our other half. Our other half is our "negative self": not in the sense of a shadow-self, but more like the invisible self that is actually the opposite of what we are. It is connected to timelessness, being, and nonaction. It is our passive side or passive aspect, our nonpersonality. As soon as we begin to meditate, we feel a sense of wholeness, as if our two halves are meeting and we are finally one unified being. This is because we need this other half. Without this other half we only know action, time, and personality. Living without knowing ourselves in this complete sense is a very limiting type of existence.
3. **Meditation frees our awareness.** Another interesting aspect of being human: we innately believe that we are just our thoughts and feelings. But through meditation, we are able to retrain our attention and bring it back to a pure, free state.
4. **Meditation develops concentration and other qualities.** This has traditionally been considered a lower purpose of meditation, but it is actually highly important. Do you really know how to concentrate? Do you really know how to gather all your being and to pay attention to such a degree that you become one with what you do? This is concentration. In this, I include the ability to play with our attention, to keep it flexible. But there are also other qualities that can be developed through meditation, like self-discipline, inner knowing, and the ability to not react. Meditation helps us develop certain capacities and abilities even while we struggle with it: through our difficulties, we achieve precious qualities.
5. **Meditation is nourishment.** Meditation is like plugging our being into the cosmic socket, plugging into a divine reservoir of energy. Meditation awakens dormant nourishing energies inside our being. This form of nourishment is not

essentially different from oxygen or food: cosmic energy feeds and sustains us all the time anyway, but meditation allows us to do this consciously, and thus enhances the flow within our body and mind.

6. **Meditation heals physical and emotional conditions.** Meditation has the power of healing, and it can heal both physically and emotionally. Whenever I go through some kind of serious treatment, like a dental operation, instead of taking painkillers I simply go to my room, close the windows, darken the room, and sit for meditation for a few hours. In this way, I evoke all the healing powers of the body. And why is that? It is because I immediately connect with an ideal of health. Meditation is a state of wholeness, a state that has never been affected by anything. By connecting with it, my body begins to align with this state of perfection and so begins to return to a state of health, which is the condition I was in before. If you're curious, try meditating next time you are in pain and see if it accelerates the healing process. Meditation may also be a potent healer of trauma, since it brings us back to a state before time and before memory, where nothing has ever happened to us. Can anything be more healing than that?
7. **Meditation creates intimacy with ourselves.** Meditation is our chance to spend time with ourselves. Not just time with ourselves in the sense of reading books, painting, or listening to music, but as a form of the deepest intimacy with oneself that is possible. You rest inside yourself and experience being at peace with yourself. Thus, meditation is the ultimate form of self-acceptance: when you are in this state, you cannot resist liking yourself, because you get to know yourself in the purest, most beautiful condition.
8. **Meditation prepares us for action.** This is also essential: meditation prepares us for action in the world. It not only takes us away and provides us with an inner haven, it also teaches us a certain inner posture. Think of the Buddha posture, which is the ultimate meditation posture. Eventually this becomes a sort of inner position in us: an erect, proud, fearless, all-accepting, completely open and available way of being. This makes us powerful beings who can come out of the sitting position with lucid minds, free of the need to react and contract, and capable of quietly responding to the challenges of life.
9. **Meditation provides the relief of limitlessness.** We spend our lives feeling as if we are stuck in a physical form, as if we are inside a box, unable to come out. This is also the reality of our mind, which can feel like a box of stifling thoughts;

all we can do is powerlessly press up against the walls, floor, and ceiling while feeling that there is no way out. One of our greatest unconscious needs is to be able to return to our original state of limitlessness from time to time. We come from limitlessness—we were not always this small—so we need these reminders, this feeling that it is possible to experience a state of no limit. This includes not only physical limits, but the internal sense that we can spread and expand our being and feel ourselves become far bigger. Ultimately, these states enable us to make peace with the limitations inherent in our human existence.

10. **Meditation helps us achieve true existence.** As we are, we don't fully exist, because we are just a bundle of conditioning—familial, religious, national, and social forms of conditioning. If we removed the contents of our environmental conditioning, and also the past and present relationships that have shaped our beings, would we still exist? Would we still have some kind of presence, even if all of that was taken away from us? In the New Testament, Jesus is quoted as saying that we are ultimately meant to be born twice: in the body and in the spirit.⁴ In meditation, we begin to be born for the second time, and until we are born in the spirit, we are spiritually “unborn,” existing only in the physical sense. Even through the process of resistance during meditation—refusing to pay attention to certain thoughts and feelings that are obsessed with matters of the outer world—we begin to become fully independent beings that don't rely on the stimuli of the external world for validation. Instead, we become self-empowering, self-sustaining, and self-confirming beings. You may have noticed that there is a paradox here: in meditation we return to our original state, but we also create ourselves for the first time, because we don't really exist as independent beings. This is because connecting to your deeper nature actually makes you natural for the first time. You start to become a part of the real world, since you previously belonged to the unnatural world of thoughts—like plastic flowers as opposed to the vibrant flowers that grow in gardens.

11. **Meditation balances the chakras.** This is the first of five purposes that are related to our subtle or energy body. Chakras are the centerpiece of this energy body, which consists of a network of tens of thousands of subtle tubes or channels called *nadis*. The chakras, which are commonly viewed as seven major confluences within this network, are situated deep within the central channel (*sushumna nadi*) that runs parallel to the spine. Chakras not only play

4. John 3:3–7 (New International Version).

a major role as a part of our energy body, they function as mediators between the different realms of spirit, psyche, and body, and thus the way that they function—whether they are balanced or unbalanced—dramatically affects, and is affected by, all the other systems. The ancient Indian meditators who became conscious of the existence of this hidden system more than 2,500 years ago (according to the oldest extant texts of the *Upanishads*) came to realize, that among other things, chakras function as gateways to broader states of consciousness and immediately respond to relaxation and meditation. As soon as we enter the state of calm, our seven energy centers are quickly brought to a state of balance. Much of the turbulence we feel in our body and mind is the result of our unbalanced energy centers, such as turmoil in the heart chakra or the brow chakra. In meditation, we supply the chakras with what they need most, harmony and peace, and as a result they instantly align. When our seven chakras are aligned, they become superconductors of energy that flows into our body and nourishes our physical being, as well as our mental and emotional levels, and clears the pathways of our energy system.

12. **Meditation awakens the root chakra.** The root chakra represents our earthly identity and all our attachments—everything that connects us to the earth. It physically obeys the law of gravity and thus won't let us transcend or soar high. In other words, it won't let us be spiritual. One of the most important subtle functions of meditation is to convince the root chakra that it can trust the spiritual state enough to allow us to move beyond gravity, in the other direction. Awakening the root chakra is therefore our permission to leave the world behind. As long as the root chakra remains unawakened, we will fear meditation. This fear is a projection or an extension of the instinctual fear of nonexistence. The conscious mind asks, *If you let go of the known and the familiar, who would you be? Where would you be? This shift represents death.* This is, however, a complete lie, because meditation is life, not death. Once the root chakra becomes convinced and trusts the meditative process sufficiently, it manages to overcome the instinctual habit to cling to the known. This is why an individual's entire spiritual journey depends on the awakening of the first chakra. The root chakra is like the gatekeeper: if it doesn't open the door, you can't have full experiences, and you will never really embark on the journey of transformation.

13. **Meditation awakens the kundalini.** At the base of the spine, where the root chakra and the sacral chakra exist, there is a tremendous force, a highly potent life-force energy that is traditionally called kundalini. As soon as you begin to meditate, you may feel an energy stream flowing upward through your spine. This is usually followed by excitation or chilling of the nerves and the feeling of heightened awareness. As we shall discover throughout this book, it is vital to awaken the kundalini, and meditation is the supreme catalyst for achieving this purpose.
14. **Meditation awakens the third eye.** Usually the third eye, which is meant to govern the world of our thoughts and functions as the supreme and all-commanding element of our being, is in a state of scatteredness and lacks concentration. When we begin to meditate, we awaken the third eye (or sixth chakra), and in this way we bring the master back home. This inner guru dominates all our disoriented feelings and confused thoughts and tells us what is real and what is false. When your sixth chakra is awake, you can actually decide what you do and don't want to identify with. This is probably the greatest power that one can ever have.
15. **Meditation allows us to come into direct contact with the universe and with the divine.** I have kept this one at the bottom of the list because most meditators don't have this kind of aspiration. Nevertheless, this may be why meditation was invented seven thousand years ago. While religion has provided us with many pathways, like worship, prayer, and moral action and conduct, there is only one way we can directly experience divinity. As long as you pray, you still feel that there is something *out there* in which you believe and trust. Meditation is the only way we have of directly knowing what we can call God or the divine—directly knowing it within our hearts and through our bodies. How do we do this? By turning ourselves into empty channels that can be filled with this presence. For that, we need to reach a complete state of nonaction that makes us completely available. I believe that this is how meditation started. There is a statement by Padre Pio, one of the greatest twentieth-century leaders of the Christian world, which perfectly conveys this purpose: "Through study of books one seeks God. By meditation one finds Him."⁵

5. Kelly, *The Rosary*, 79, 86.

When you understand that all these purposes can be fulfilled by simply engaging in the act of meditation, you may feel greatly inspired. So, out of this list of fifteen, which are your purposes? What meditation will be like for you and how transformative your practice can be depends on what your purposes are and on the depth of intention with which you enter the meditation.

The Four Major Goals of Our Journey

Note: Although I have four major goals, you may have some other goals of your own. Feel free to add your own goals to this list.

1. **Acquiring the art of meditation.** Meditation is, after all, a form of art. When we practice it, we are like artists approaching a process of creation—in this context, the process of self-creation. What we create is ourselves, our own state of mind, and our own way of being. But it is an art, which means that it is very delicate and requires precision and deep mastery of the tools that you have at your disposal. To make meditation effortless, beautiful, harmonious, and ever-deepening, we need to actually become masters.
2. **Making the meditative experience transformative and profound.** You may have found a meditation technique that feels good, but the question is, how can we come out of meditation in a way that changes us? How can we go through it in a way that becomes a transformation? This also requires great learning, and we will examine it throughout the book.
3. **Learning the range of techniques and understanding their guiding principles.** There are plenty of meditation techniques out there. There is no one school, one religion, or one system that is the source of meditation. Meditation is a universal principle around which so many types of techniques have come into being, among them Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi, Taoist, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and New Age meditations, and a great many more come from various independent teachers. Even I have contributed to the overwhelming variety of the world of meditation by adding dozens of meditation techniques! First of all, we need to become familiar with the existing range of techniques, particularly the leading and most established ones. This requires walking a thin line somehow, since we are going to study the religious or traditional contexts in which these techniques emerged while remembering that at our point in time, these meditations have been separated from their contexts. When these techniques

were used traditionally, they were practiced within a certain context: each was just one practice among many others, with a clear set of rules, regulations, and ways of action. Nowadays we isolate the meditative techniques themselves. Of course, we will unavoidably be exposed to these traditional contexts, but much more importantly, we will have the chance to study the guiding principles of these techniques: why they were designed in certain ways, what the mechanism is behind them, etc. You are welcome to choose which techniques are your favorites, but I encourage you to also pay attention to which techniques challenge you. Some people will feel more inclined toward the closed-eyes meditations, which can be considered the classical form of meditation: sitting with eyes closed in a certain posture, focusing on something or not focusing on anything. Others will prefer more dynamic types of meditation. Whatever the case, it's important to master and understand all of them. Then we can choose techniques that are especially relevant to each point of our evolution, wherever we are on our journey.

4. **Inspiring you to guide others with confidence.** After sufficient learning and practice, perhaps you will feel confident enough to sit with your patients, partners, friends, or children and bring them into the state of meditation. By the time you finish reading this book, you will understand the mechanisms of meditation, the difficulties and hindrances, and how to remove them; how to create a certain energy field in the room that makes it possible for people to enter meditation; how to respond to any questions about the process; and how to guide others to come out of the meditation and reenter their daily lives. You will have a range of meditation techniques at your disposal, and if you wish to guide an ongoing process, you will feel able to select the appropriate techniques for each stage along the way. If you know how to meditate, if you are confident about meditation, and if you have gone through all the difficulties in the meditative process and have been transformed through meditation, you have already done much of the work required to become a meditation teacher. If you understand yourself, you understand everyone else. Once you understand the principles of meditation, you may even be inspired to create your own. You can meditate however you want, as long as the technique manages to give rise to the state of meditation.

This Book's Journey

Our journey into the world of meditation is divided into seven layers or dimensions, based on a meaningful concept that I will briefly explain here.

In part I, we explore the fundamentals of meditation. This is not yet the time to approach specific meditation techniques. We must first take a step back and ask “What is meditation?” and explore the basics that are often forgotten when we rush into the actual practice: differences between technique and state, the nature of the meditative perspective as opposed to our ordinary perception, and the ways that meditation can be improved and deepened.

The second part of this book consists of seven extensive chapters, which are loosely based on and inspired by the principle of the chakras. This does not mean that we are simply going to meditate on our chakras! Chakra meditations are just a small part of the world of meditations. However, the map of seven chakras is an elegant way of classifying all the meditation techniques in the world into seven distinct categories or seven gateways—seven ways to enter and reach the meditative state. These can also be thought of as seven different types of awakening enabled by the world of meditation. So, although I will discuss chakras as the seven energy centers that we awaken using certain meditations, they will certainly not be our focus of attention. Think of the chapters as building on one another. With each chapter we are going to enhance our meditative capacity, since the chakra ladder also makes it possible for us to build our being from the root upward.

In part II, chapter 4 explores techniques that deal with unifying and aligning body and mind. This subject is deeply related to the root chakra, whose process of balancing and awakening has a lot to do with bodily awareness. The root chakra–related techniques help us leave our thoughts behind and attain bodily awareness and presence. They make use of the liberating potential of true physical presence. At the same time, they free our being from attachment to our material existence, as they awaken the root chakra’s dormant spiritual potential. Here we are going to study very well-known techniques, such as the Buddhist mindfulness of breathing and walking meditation, the Qigong standing meditation, Jon Kabat-Zinn’s Body Scan, and Zazen (the classical Zen meditation).

Chapter 5 contains sacral chakra–related techniques, and it is concerned with meditations whose main purpose is to lead us to total experience. This type of meditation is focused on physical release, life force enhancement, unconditional joy, and freeing our being from the observer that separates us from life and experience—therein lies the unique challenge of these meditations, since in many ways they invite us to become one with our meditation. Here we are going to study the Taoist inner smile, Osho’s Mystic Rose, my own expansion of positive feelings method, Japanese forest bathing, and the Taoist testicle/ovarian breathing. This is a wild chapter!

Introduction

Chapter 6 is all about building our pure and powerful presence. These are the techniques related to the solar plexus chakra. These techniques challenge our bodily attachments and help us find in ourselves an indestructible self, a fully independent “I am” awareness. In this way, they help us create unconditional inner power and centeredness. This chapter has techniques such as Jon Kabat-Zinn’s mountain meditation, Gurdjieff’s “I Am” meditation, Sufi Whirling, the tantric Buddhist vase breathing, and the Hindu Kumbhaka. This is a rather serious chapter. (As you make your way through this book, you will feel that each chapter has a very different fragrance, quality, and direction.)

We will then shift to the heart chakra–related techniques, which are all about recognizing oneness: recognizing the self in the other, and even in all that is. These techniques help us connect with the eternal stream of true love and develop the quality of compassion. They also reveal the aspect of meditation as healing. Here we are going to study the Hindu and Buddhist inner cave of the heart, the Buddhist loving-kindness meditation and Tonglen, the Christian Prayer of the Heart, and the Islamic Dhikr.

From there we move on to the throat chakra chapter, which is all about what I call “vibrations of reality.” These throat chakra–related techniques deal with vibrations. *Vibrations* are anything that appears in the form of sound, like echoes of reality. Here we are going to explore basic sounds of creation and the power of the vibrational world. This range of meditations enables us to achieve purification and unite our inner world with the outer world. We will delve into the Hindu aum meditation, Osho’s center of sound, the Sikh Kirtan Kriya, the Hindu meditation on the inner sound, and the Jewish method of Hitbodedut.

Chapter 9 focuses on achieving the clarity of truth. It is all about sixth chakra–related techniques that support the opening of our inner eye: the eye of inner wisdom. When we remove the illusions, we are able to perceive invisible realities that only our inner eye sees. Here we will get to know the Zen Buddhist koan, Ramana Maharshi’s self-inquiry, the Hindu Sri Yantra, the tantra Buddhist deity yoga, and the Hindu and Buddhist darkness meditation.

The last chapter is the crown chakra chapter, which is all about returning to our original state. By chapter 10, we will be able to easily meditate after going through six other chapters of meditation techniques. We will have built our meditative capacity in such a way that it will be easy to reach these seventh-chakra meditations. Here we are going to move to techniques that return to the original state before creation, and in doing so, we will meet our faceless face. We will enter the world of the yogi: the world of samadhi, deeper states of meditation, self-absorption, and the dissolution of the separate self. We will study the tantra Buddhist empty body and subtle body visualizations, the tantric Hindu kriya yoga, the Tibetan Buddhist Dzogchen, the tantric Buddhist Mahamudra meditation, and Subud’s Latihan.

As you will surely have noticed by now, the range of techniques in this book is vast: it includes meditations rooted in Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoist tantra, Islam, Sufism, Sikhism, mystical Christianity, mystical Judaism (Kabbalah); techniques by Osho and Gurdjieff; New Age meditations; and even one of my own. This is a grand process, and that is why we must follow this law of meditation: *Always be here and now. Do not think too far ahead.* In the here and now, there is already so much to explore; we cannot waste our attention on thinking ahead.