



**5 PART MEDITATION
FOR AWARENESS, HEALING,
INTEGRATION & WORTHINESS**

*Building Inner Harmony, Balance, and
Empowerment.*

Meditation is the art of letting go and tuning in.



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“THE 5 STEP PROCESS”

A Process for Healing, Wisdom & Empowerment

Step 1. Self Acceptance

Without self acceptance we cannot heal or grow. Often we may feel that our problem is that other people don't accept us, until we stop and realize that this simply points to the ways in which we don't accept ourselves. Every human being has fears and insecurities and gets confused. Every human being has natural wisdom and a deep capacity to love. When we can accept both sides of ourselves, we can then consciously heal our wounded and confused self with our own inner-wisdom. The doorway to our true potential then opens to us. We are then in a better position to accept and work with any challenges that we may face in life.

Step 2. Personal Responsibility

When we combine acceptance with responsibility, self-condemnation is replaced with compassionate caring for our own humanness. Facing our issues is much easier when choosing this approach because personal responsibility simply becomes an opportunity to build a better relationship with ourselves. The result is an increasing inner harmony. Also, unhealthy dependency and conflict is reduced, improving our relationships with those around us.

Step 3. Let Go & Tune In

The key to happiness and empowerment is a harmonious connection to our own self. Getting caught up in judgement and conflict with ourselves and others shatters this connection. As we learn to let go of these negative thought patterns and instead tune into and care for our own needs and feelings, we discover our own power of wisdom and healing. As a result we gain an increasing experience of command over our own lives. As our hearts heal and open, we increasingly attract love and abundance into our lives.

Step 4. Live in the Now

When we get in touch with our needs and feelings, we are increasingly able to achieve the clarity of mind to take wise action on our own behalf. Another benefit of tuning in is that we discover how to learn from the past, set goals and make plans for the future, but live in the now. As a result our life simplifies, and our happiness and vitality increases. Self-empowerment and self-mastery becomes a real experience in our lives.

Step 5. Live the Process

Step 5 is about committing to this new empowered way of approaching life. By working these steps, every problem becomes an opportunity to connect more with ourselves and grow stronger. Our ability to trust and be confident increases. We attract healthier relationships and we better manage those relationships we have. Every day we continue to evolve into our true potential. Every day we have something to give back to the world, for we increasingly have love to spare.

Introduction

The purpose of this meditation process is to awaken your inner-spirit and thus your limitless potential. This is first and foremost achieved by building a conscious and compassionate relationship with your vulnerable and often run-down, stressed and confused human self. This is because higher states of consciousness can only be achieved on a permanent basis through genuine integration of the human or lower-self into the Higher-Self. Many processes attempt to escape from the lower-self and its suffering, but this builds no real foundation of true attainment, leaving you prone to crashing back down to earth in the face of the next challenge that life may present to you. This compassionate relationship with yourself is achieved by detaching your consciousness a little from your vulnerable body/mind and connecting instead to your Higher-Self where unconditional love and wisdom is a natural state of being. The integrating—the embracing of the lower-self and all its challenges *is* the path to self-realization—the path to knowing that you are much more than this.

Consciousness can be said to be ego that has liberated itself from blindly serving the fear-based lower-self or body/mind that only knows survival. At this survival level of limited awareness the ego thinks it is in control, but this illusion can only be maintained by denial of reality as it is. Often, when we predominantly live our lives through our ego we can achieve success in some areas of our lives, such as business, but other areas suffer, such as our health or our relationships. Maintaining health and relationships may require more of a heart/feeling approach that is then integrated with the discipline and rational intelligence needed to be successful in business. An ego that is blindly serving the survival mind of the lower-self is unable to grasp the whole picture in this way. On its own, in its vain attempts to escape from suffering, the ego inevitably creates more suffering.

When an ego recognizes it has no real power of its own it soon discovers that it must give way to something greater than itself. Preceding this realization is often a prolonged crisis that crushes the ego, or there is an inner-restlessness, a yearning for something more than the ego can provide. There comes a recognition that trying to control, manipulate or wage war with the world around us to get what we want is a futile exercise. We start to look within for the answers to our suffering and restlessness. As a result we become the conscious observer of a mind that we once allowed to blindly drive

us this way and that. What we first discover with this self-observation often delivers us a rude shock. We discover a mind that is out of control, a mind that is frequently in the grip of fear and confusion. We at first watch helplessly as this mind spends its days tripping over itself, creating its own suffering. We try to stop it, to change its course somehow, but despite our best efforts we more often fail. We know we must somehow gain control of this mind of ours but how? After further despair we finally begin the hunt for someone who has some answers to our dilemma. Out of necessity we embark on a journey of self-discovery and self-mastery, providing we don't give way to the false promises of those who say they can "save" us or "fix" us. Those who truly know the way know they can only be guides and facilitators who help others find their own way.

Consciousness has the capacity to gain power over the mind but this capacity has to be awakened and exercised in order to gain this strength, and the power that the consciousness uses only comes through it from the Higher-Self. By developing qualities such as stillness, clarity and compassion, you can safely embrace and heal the confusion and emotional/physical woundedness afflicting your human body/mind. Inner-peace can be found even when your personal life is still beset with challenges, such is the power of consciousness when it is truly aware and connected to the Higher-Self. In fact, this inner-peace is essential for finding your way through these challenges and in the process growing into a more mature and wise adult.

Our vulnerable human self has been habitually set in its ways through the course of our childhood and then these habitual behaviors have been reinforced and compounded throughout our adolescence and adulthood. A major difficulty with this habitual level of our mind is that we are mostly unaware of its existence. Most of this conditioning was accumulated gradually, being assimilated into the mind as a product of daily experience.

What can be called negative conditioning consists of the ingrained ways we think, feel and react that no longer serve our highest good. This is held in place by layered belief systems taken on board by a child's mind who could not yet process beyond an irrational instinctual emotional level. Therefore, many of these beliefs that our mind now takes for granted are confused and out of step with reality. On a subconscious level of our mind, these beliefs and their emotional consequences are now operating independently from our present conscious adult knowing. In many cases these subconscious irrational and child-like beliefs are more powerful than our more mature ways of relating to ourselves and the world.

This is why we end up behaving in ways that we would rather not, particularly when our emotional and physical security is threatened. When this hap-

pens our instinctual habitual mind kicks in before we have a chance to think consciously. Before we know it we are behaving the same way we did as a powerless, vulnerable and confused child.

These unconscious and habitual ways of thinking are also behind the narrowly driven ways of behavior that I mentioned before—success in one area of our lives being at the expense of other essential parts of our lives, such as health.

This is the dilemma of humanity and its suffering. We are not in conscious command of our own mind. This more primitive fear-based level of our mind is often more powerful than our conscious awareness because, by its very nature, it is habitual. It does not consciously think and therefore it does not doubt itself. It is simply like a recording mechanism that cannot control, and does not discriminate, what is recorded onto it. This is particularly the case for a child. There are of course ways in which this level of our mind serves us positively. Think of the ways it helps us effortlessly complete tasks such as driving a car or reading this booklet. This useful knowing has been deeply recorded into this part of our subconscious mind, but so has a lot of confusion.

It isn't until we are well into our adolescence that we gain some form of conscious discrimination strong enough to assess and choose what we want to consciously believe. Until then for at least fourteen years this level of our instinctual mind has been exposed to the world with few defenses to protect it. Fourteen years is a lot of learning. We end up taking for granted as truth a lot of information that is not the truth. This is why a child needs to be taken care of by elders who are meant to be loving, conscious and aware for the child who does not yet have this ability.

Hands up who had perfect parents and a perfect childhood environment. No? Then welcome to the human race and the human dilemma.

Of course it does not have to end there. We are not doomed to be forever the victims of this confused part of our human minds. As adults we have the capacity to access our higher consciousness which is pure love/wisdom. We access this higher consciousness many times in our lives without necessarily being aware of it. We can feel it in those beautiful moments of genuine love, compassion, courage and humility. At those times we effortlessly display a great depth of feeling, knowing and inner-strength, that is before our fear returns and shuts love out again.

Likewise, you can tell when you are operating from the lower, more primal and confused level of your mind. Reactive thoughts and emotions are inevitably activated such as anger, rage, resentment, sadness, despondency, envy, blaming, judgementalism, pride, defensiveness, selfishness etc., which

are all simply aspects of fear. In other words, any driven form of behavior that creates conflict, disharmony and imbalance in your life.

The purpose and goal of self-realization is to be able to access and operate from the higher level of our consciousness at will. To do this however, the lower, more primitive level of our mind needs to be addressed. It is here the 5-Step Process, and other processes like it, come into play. Through the act of accepting our vulnerable, frightened human self and choosing to take loving care of it with the commitment to total personal responsibility, the beginnings of a path to that higher consciousness is automatically set in motion. This is because, through committing to acceptance and responsibility, you are already actively aligning your ego to your higher consciousness. Persistently steering your life in this direction will inevitably result in positive changes in your life.

Therefore your conscious love-based Self becomes the active carer of your vulnerable and confused human self, like a loving and aware parent would be toward his or her own confused and troubled child. Treated in this way, the child is guaranteed to grow into a healthy, well-adjusted and mature adult, even if there is a period of more intense and deep healing that must take place first.

Be aware though, loving acceptance of our vulnerable human self, or inner-child self, does not mean indulging it. This inevitably leads to ego selfishness. We must avoid being a slave to our inner-child's fears and neediness. Acceptance must come with a full commitment to take personal responsibility for our inner-child—in other words, for everything our mind/body does, says, feels and thinks. This is Step 1 & 2 of the 5-Step Process and the foundation of any self-development/spiritual path.

On a deeper and broader level, our own vulnerable human self is a symbolic representation of all beings. This is what is meant by 'love your neighbor as yourself.' In other words, as a being of consciousness, having awakened the love that is already within you and channeled this to your own human self, you are well on the way to ending all conflict with all beings, and therefore ending your own suffering in the process.

Through this process, self-development can also be, with dedicated practice, extended into higher levels of self-mastery, similar to what is achieved in advanced levels of yoga and martial art. However, too many people in this age of spiritual renaissance are getting themselves lost trying to be enlightened beings before they have learned to become conscious human beings. First things first. The foundations must be laid before the temple can be built (See diagram on page 37).

The 5-Step Process on page 4 contains the essential principles for this

meditation process. Meditation is essentially Step 3 work. Steps 1 & 2 prepare the ground for Step 3. Step 3 then empowers Step 4. Step 5 reminds us that this process never ends. We keep practicing it every day in order to keep growing every day. On the level of consciousness we never cease expanding. The wellbeing of our body/mind throughout our entire life depends on this. Nothing physical is permanent. Everything physical must be actively maintained, from our car to our home to our body/mind, if we want it to last. The mind has an added element and that is its propensity to get very confused. If we don't keep track of this confusion then the life that we truly want will continually elude us. However, what is even sadder about neglecting ourselves is that we don't give ourselves a chance to awaken to how incredibly wonderful we all truly are.

Read and study this whole exercise before beginning this meditation practice. Use Part 1 and 2 of the 5-Step Process and the meditation process as a preliminary to Parts 3, 4 & 5.



Part 1

Meditation for Connecting with Self

☉ Start with a few deep breaths to oxygenate the body, then breathe deeply and very slowly to help you stay conscious of your breath. Your breath connects you to your body. Your body is in the now and this is where your conscious awareness needs to be in order to observe the mind, which has great difficulty being still due to its dependency on constant distraction. Stay consciously connected to your breath otherwise your turbulent mind tends to engulf your conscious awareness and thus keep you in a state of confusion, ignorance and suffering. You have a body and you have a mind, but you are neither of these. You are your present conscious awareness serving your Highest-Consciousness. At this level of your being you never grow old—you are constantly vitally alive and in the presence of unlimited potential. Nevertheless, you are bonded to this body/mind in this life-time in a way that is essential for the evolution of your consciousness. Your body/mind depends on you to look after it like a child needs the loving guidance and care of a parent. As consciousness, you are learning how to be that parent. Experiencing your body/mind can be painful or beautiful depending on whether your attitude toward it is judging or loving.

☉ Treat every breath as a new ‘now’ moment, which it is. Focus on your breath to keep your conscious awareness in the now. Everything you need to know is always with you in the now moment, your confusion as well as your Higher-Self—your way out of the confusion. In your mind, past, present and future is all happening now. You can experience it all through conscious awareness of your own body/mind. Do not struggle with your mind in an attempt to silence it. Just gently bring your conscious awareness back to your breath when it gets distracted. Let your slow, deep breath relax your mind, which will naturally slow your mind down, but remain alert nonetheless. Allow your breath to be the central point in your awareness where you can observe, feel and experience your total self without being distracted from the present moment.

☉ When we breathe we don't just inhale and exhale air, we are engaging in an energy exchange with life. Breath therefore links us to a vitalizing force in the form of Prana/Chi, which is food for the body/mind. Breathing consciously vitalizes your body for it allows you to connect to this energy more fully, and also raise its quality with the power of your thought. Prana is a higher, more subtle force that is more akin to consciousness than the physical properties of air. To help this process, breathe more from your solar plexus than your chest. Let your diaphragm draw the air into your lungs, which deepens your breath and brings greater vitality into your system. This may seem strange at first but you soon get used to it. If you are trained in yoga or singing you will know what I mean. Your breath is a gift to your body. The more aware you are of your breath process the more valuable the gift you can give to yourself.

☉ To feel this energy flowing through your body more easily imagine that you are now surrounded by a field of intensified spiritual Light. Now consider that you are breathing this healing energy in as if it is flowing into you from within the center of your heart. Breathe the air normally as before but imagine this energy is building in your heart. Once you have breathed in, hold your breath for a few seconds allowing the energy to expand in your heart, and then on your out-breath feel the energy flowing throughout your body. Don't make this into an effort. It is a natural process. Be aware that this spiritual energy is pure love/compassion, even though you are perhaps only feeling it on a physical level, or even if it's just an idea. In time you will feel this energy gently radiating through you.

☉ Now take the time to focus on and connect to your body, part by part, from the tips of your toes to the top of your head. Use your imagination and your breath to direct the energy to each part of your body that is in your focus. You can also direct your awareness to your body's energy centers or chakras, if you are familiar with this. The objective is to connect, feel, observe, experience what is, without trying to control or fix anything. It is about giving yourself the gift of your conscious breath, which is in turn a channel for the healing energy of spirit/prana.

☉ Treat pain or pleasure the same. Treat every sensation that you feel in your body simply as an interesting experience of equal value. You are learning not to judge, not to be in resistance/conflict with anything but rather be present and observe, experience, feel. This allows your ego to let go and your higher mind to come more into focus. Breathe into each part of the body you are focusing on to vitalize it but do not make an effort about this. You need to be

relaxed and detached. We naturally and effortlessly return to a state of balance and harmony by simply accepting what *is* and staying present in the moment. The more stressed you are, the more you need to take time with this part of the exercise.

☉ Stay present with your body. Consciousness is love/wisdom/power. Consciousness is a quality of our Soul/Higher-Self. Our bodies get little quality conscious attention because we are too busy running around lost in our ego trying to control life due to fear and a lack of trust. This depletes our body/mind of energy and tunes us out from what our instinctual body and Higher-Consciousness is trying to tell us for our own good. Concentrate on feeling, observing and experiencing your body. Let your Higher-Consciousness inform you of what *is* rather than your being controlled by your fear-based ego, which tends to distort the experience of the moment with its projections.

☉ Now deepen your connection with yourself by bringing the optimal conscious attitude toward your vulnerable humanness into focus. This conscious attitude is one of complete acceptance of your humanness and body as it is. This is your doorway into unconditional love. Empower your experience of this by imagining that your every inbreath is opening up your heart to your human body/mind. Welcome your little human self into the loving sanctuary of your heart. Your heart is like the sacred temple of your consciousness where the light of your Higher-Self resides. Let go of getting love from outside yourself. Loving yourself from the center of your own conscious enables you to get this precious water of life direct from the very source of the purist mountain spring. With each inbreath let all defenses and judgments against yourself fall away from your consciousness even while your lower human mind is still stuck in these old habits. Welcome in your humanness no matter what state it is in and be with it, while keeping your consciousness still, detached and observant with this attitude of complete acceptance and loving kindness. Such an enlightened conscious attitude holds within it its own natural healing force due to the alignment this attitude sets in place with your Higher-Consciousness. Don't *try* to feel, just be. Let go of expectations.

☉ Let every outbreath be like an embracing of your human self—a commitment to take full care of this little self but refusing to judge yourself for your humanness and also refusing to judge anyone else for their humanness, no matter how misguided their behavior may be. Problems in your outer life can be sorted out later. Here you are accessing love, clarity, wisdom—gaining the power to act consciously, wisely and compassionately when the time comes to act. Action that is empowered with true consciousness is in tune with the

highest good of all, including yourself, whether that means stepping closer to someone or placing a protective boundary around yourself in response to someone's confusion.

☉ While you are breathing your humanness into your heart and taking full responsibility for it you must remember that this is all that you are doing. You must keep your ego, who habitually wants to jump in to judge or fix things, still and quiet. Otherwise you risk sinking back into confusion, conflict and distraction. Transform your ego into aware consciousness that serves your inner-master, your Higher-Consciousness. It is your Higher-Consciousness that does the work of healing and transforming your lower mind. As an aware ego (present aware consciousness) your job is simply to hold the door to your heart open, to keep still and quiet in your breath and observe. Let your Higher-Conscious naturally reveal to you, within this stillness, the true nature of things.

☉ Spend some time focused in this way, gently bringing yourself back to your breath, body and right attitude each time you get distracted. Do your best not to get frustrated with your wayward mind. Old habits naturally die hard. The only objective is to be present and accept yourself as you are. Awareness will be the first thing you will gain from this. All positive change flows from awareness. You are just getting to know yourself without judgment. This can have a powerful healing and calming effect on its own. Remember, from the level of ego you do not need to fix yourself. Behind this need to fix is a subtle form of self-judgment—a need to escape from yourself rather than connect. Right now you are learning to be present with yourself with loving kindness. You are learning to make friends with yourself. Your Higher-Self does all the rest. It is very very simple and it needs to be kept this way. Be still and present with your body without being in conflict even with your wayward mind. There is nothing else to do but this.

☉ Continue to breathe, connect, feel, observe and experience what is and accept what is. Find peace in this acceptance, this letting go of the need to judge and control. This is a place of *being*. As you increase your ability to stay present in this Beingness, your connection with vitality, as well as to your own wisdom, compassion, and personal power will also increase.

(For working directly with emotions see Part 4).

Part 2

Meditation for Detachment and Insight

☉ After you have practiced Part 1 of this meditation process a number of times, it is now time to deepen your power of detachment and ability for insight. Begin by spending about ten minutes on Part 1 connecting to your breath, body and right attitude toward your human self. Remember that you are a being of aware consciousness taking loving care of your human body/mind and in so doing, aligning yourself to your Higher-Self. Remember that your ego must be kept quiet, still and occupied just holding the door of your heart open to allow your lower mind in to be observed and embraced without judgment.

☉ On the level of conscious awareness, you have qualities more akin to your Higher-Self. Therefore, as consciousness you are limitless like a vast, still, deep blue/green ocean. To this beautiful ocean of peace, your lower mind is no more than a river flowing into it. If you trust your power of consciousness, and keep your heart open with your breath, even if your lower mind is like a raging torrent, this great ocean of peace can easily receive it. You will not be swept away. Consciousness can simply keep expanding to embrace all that enters into it. This is the power of your transcendental nature. This is who you truly are. You have a body and you have a mind, but as a conscious being you are neither of these, even though you are the loving and wise guardian of your body/mind. The power of meditation is in building a conscious identity that is aligned to the principles of Beingness. In so doing you are no longer identifying yourself as the limited lower mind. This awakens your natural transcendental consciousness—your inner-spirit. The more that this greater awareness grows, the more powerful your meditation for healing, insight and integration grows, and the more your outer life will improve.

☉ Now as you are meditating, staying present in your breath and being the great, still ocean of conscious awareness, do your best to maintain this stillness. To help this process, breathe slowly and very deeply in your body like you are reaching deep into your heart with your breath to connect to the very essence of your divine Higher-Self. Do not be caught up in an agenda however. Simply accept the best connection you can achieve at any given moment as perfect. This connection will naturally improve with practice. The journey is more important than the goal because the journey is you in the now. You can imagine that the portal to this vast awareness is at your third

eye or inner-eye situated between your eyebrows and your heart is the deep loving energy of this ocean.

☉ Now as your awareness is resting peacefully within this great deep blue/green ocean of consciousness, observe without judgment whatever persistent thoughts or distractions push into this place of peace. Simply observe and note what it is but do not get caught up in it. You can imagine that you gently catch this distraction in your hands and gently hold it for a moment to identify what it is. Once this brief awareness of this distraction is awakened, let the distraction drop into your vast ocean of consciousness where it is instantly absorbed back into the Oneness. Having done this, simply return to your inner-peace. When the next distraction pushes through, do the same. Simply accept its presence, hold it gently in your hands to be consciously aware of what it is without any judgment, and then allow it to drop into the ocean where it instantly vanishes into the Oneness.

☉ Continue with this process for as long as you wish. Continue to be very focused on your breath, connecting deep into your heart. Be still, observe what enters into your inner-peace, identify it and then let it drop into the ocean. (Feel free to use your own imagery. The intension is what is important.) This process will help you to experience yourself as pure consciousness and see that you are not these distractions that come and go. Consciousness on this level is permanent and limitless. Mind is a conglomeration of ultimately fear-based thoughts that are dependent on impermanent material things. As consciousness you can identify these distractions without being *identified with them*. In other words, without being caught up in them. Simply note what keeps coming around. You can gain great insight into the nature of your confused and wounded lower mind with this process. A clear observation of your core issues is inevitably revealed here. Also, you open your awareness to the opportunity to observe the true nature of these distractions without your ego getting in the way with its judging, denying and grasping. You are giving yourself a chance to see yourself and life from the great awareness of your Higher-Self.

☉ There are two objectives here. One is to develop the power of concentration and detachment. This is essential for creating the ability and strength of consciousness to embrace your lower mind with conscious awareness, rather than have your lower mind engulf your consciousness and sweep you away. The second is to recognize and identify yourself as a beautiful being of consciousness—truly a child of God, however you wish to relate to this concept. At this Soulful level of your being you are taking care of a sensitive and vul-

nerable body/mind that has naturally become confused and fearful whilst trying to survive in this world. Reawakening to the Universal/Unconditional Love that you have always been and learning how to take care of and master your human self is your spiritual opportunity and the doorway to your highest potential and destiny.

☯ It is important to practice this detachment and insight meditation daily, even if it is just for ten to fifteen minutes at a time. You can also use your journal in conjunction with any of these meditations (see page 26).

Part 3

Meditation for Embracing your Body

☉ As with Part 2, begin by spending about ten minutes on Part 1 connecting to your breath, body and right attitude toward your human self. Remember that you are a being of aware consciousness taking loving care of your human body/ mind and in so doing, aligning yourself to your Higher-Self. Remember that your ego must be kept quiet, still and occupied just holding the door of your heart open to allow your lower mind in to be observed and embraced without judgment.

☉ Now as you are breathing and staying focused in your body, open your mind to how you feel about your body. What is your attitude towards your body? How sensitively aware of your body are you? Spend some time getting in touch with this. Do not judge your thoughts or feelings. Simply once again feel, observe, experience. This is an exercise in getting to know and accept yourself as you are. It is about opening your heart to your whole self. You cannot truly care for yourself or anyone else with a closed heart. Also, your lower mind cannot change itself at any real depth. The power to do this must come from a higher source. You can't connect with this higher-self while you are busy trying to control yourself at an ego level, or ignoring yourself, for that matter. So be still, connect, feel, observe, and experience. Get to know your mind and body and accept what you find. You are perfect just as you are in this moment, confusion and all. In other words, you don't need to judge yourself to take care of yourself.

☉ Spend some time connecting to how you feel about your body. Have compassion for any part of your mind that wants to judge. Have compassion for your self who is being judged.

☉ Now imagine that your body is like a small child looking to you for acceptance and loving support, such as yourself as a young child. Can you give compassion to your body, this child? Can you breathe into your body sending it loving kindness with every breath? Do not pretend to do this because I say to do it. Really feel what you are doing. Get in touch with how you feel. Accept where you are with this without judgment. This is an exercise in knowing and accepting yourself as you are in this moment. The more that you can accept yourself as you are, the easier it is to grow without effort, the more motivated you will be to take care of yourself.

☉ If your body is sick, can you be with the sickness with your heart open without fear? Are you willing to consciously support your body through this challenge? Rather than trying to fearfully fix your body, can you let it into your consciousness where a connection to your healing power can be found? Do this without expectation. Simply open, connect, observe, experience. Imagine sending the loving energy from your breath into every cell of your body. Experiment with imagery and colour, always with your heart, your feeling self open.

☉ Attempting to give yourself loving kindness first exposes how shut off or in conflict you are with yourself, how you put conditions on your acceptance of yourself. The ideal that you need to be moving toward is total unconditional self-acceptance no matter what you look like or how you feel. The more you can do this, the more you open yourself to your own power to love, heal and to grow. Accepting where you are now and every day is the secret to this practice and to peace of mind. Acceptance motivates us to naturally grow. Non-acceptance blocks our growth. So drop the agendas. Do not impose this ideal on yourself. Simply allow yourself to naturally flow toward it everyday by accepting yourself. You are your best friend. The ideal is already in your heart. It is your natural state. You are simply returning to this by letting go of your confusion bit by bit as your awareness grows.

☉ Now take your breath deep into your body. Make sure your breath is slow, deep, conscious but relaxed. Open your mind to the fact that your body has its own consciousness, intelligence and sensitivity. It knows when it is being loved or being rejected and reacts accordingly. Open your mind and heart to your body. With your will, and with genuine feeling, pledge your commitment to take loving care of this body. Be aware that this body has already pledged to carry you on this journey of life until its last day. It deserves to be looked after.

☉ Feel and get in touch with your body through your breath. With every in-breath, accept and welcome your body into your heart of compassion. Be aware of any negative feelings you have toward your body. Accept and welcome this confusion into your heart of compassion as well, letting the Light of compassion gently heal the confusion without your ego trying to fix anything. Remember that your Soul/Higher-Self does the healing work. Our ego is just there to hold open the door to the heart.

☉ Cultivate an attitude of loving kindness towards your body. With every breath you take let it be like lovingly stroking your body inside and out with

the love-infused energy of your breath. Systematically focus on each part of your body, inside and out. Spend time sending this loving energy to each part of your body.

☉ Now in your imagination, take into your arms this small child whom you have imagined your body to be. Hold this child and treat him/her with tenderness and love. Observe what imagery comes into your imagination. Observe your emotions, feelings and thoughts. Reflect on what the imagery is telling you and allow this imagery to spontaneously evolve as you continue to practice this meditation.

☉ After your meditation, spend some time writing about your meditation experience in your journal. Reflect on how you can take better care of your body and then put these insights into action.

Part 4

Meditation for Emotional Healing

☉ When you find yourself in the grip of emotional pain and sadness, whether you access this pain during a meditation or it is triggered by circumstances in your daily living, it is important to give yourself a chance to get in touch with, heal and integrate these emotions. This is essential to achieve inner-harmony, harmony with others and self-empowerment.

☉ Compassion is the root of all healing. Therefore compassion for ourselves, even when we are in the grip of shame and anger, for example, enables us to appropriately move through the layers of these emotions without getting stuck on them once again, or perhaps even lashing out at others.

☉ As usual, begin by spending some time connecting to your breath, body and right attitude toward your human self. Remember that you are a being of aware consciousness taking loving care of your human body/mind and in so doing, aligning yourself to your Higher-Self. Remember that your ego must be kept quiet, still and occupied just holding the door of your heart open to allow your lower mind in to be observed and embraced without judgment. Breathe, connect, observe, feel, experience, but don't try to "fix" your emotional energy. As a conscious being, you are like an open door to your Higher-Self, the servant to your inner-Master. Therefore, put your ego's need to control your emotions aside and simply stay present with them, get to know them, allow them to talk to you, allow them to flow through you. *Allowing, flowing, being* are words that apply to this process. When our ego tries to fix emotions it just ends up pushing them back down without their being healed. It is your Higher-Self that ultimately does the healing work. As an ego you are reawakening to yourself as the great still ocean of consciousness which is filled with the healing Light of your Higher-Self.

☉ Watch out for perceptions or thoughts that want to judge the emotion as wrong or project fearful imaginings onto it. Emotion is a natural and necessary bodily function that must be allowed to take its course. Your negative thinking patterns are different, however. They come from the confusion in your mind and actually cause your emotions to be more intense than they would normally be. Emotional energy must be allowed to flow. Your thoughts, however, must be brought into alignment with loving acceptance and personal responsibility. If this is not done, emotional healing will not

take place. Watch out for your mind's need to blame people including yourself. Blame is not an emotion. Blame is a misguided fear-based perception. Blame is a limited survival reaction of the confused lower mind. It only perpetuates conflict and powerlessness. Your lower mind does not know any better. That is why, like a child, it needs your conscious awareness to lovingly and wisely take care of it. Concentrate on staying with your breath and being present with the emotion, allowing it to flow freely.

☉ If you can identify a particular issue that has triggered the emotion, spend a few moments getting in touch with what that issue is about without getting caught up in it. Let your victim mind have its way only long enough to get into the emotion. This will enable you to better access the deeper thought-forms associated with the issue. Place your focus on how you are experiencing this situation, how you feel about it and how your mind is dealing with it. As you keep observing the confused thoughts of your lower mind, do your best not to get caught up trying to analyze them. Let the still, deep Beingness of your Higher-Consciousness naturally dismantle them. Confusion cannot stand firm in the face of truth. Let truth do its own work. Do your best to let go of what other people are doing to you. You can only effectively deal with others once you have taken care of the reactions from your own wounded lower mind.

☉ Keep breathing these emotions deeply into your heart where the Light of your Soul/Higher-Self is waiting. Let your inner-Spirit do the healing while you openly accept your human self into your conscious self.

☉ To build compassion for your humanness remind yourself that you have a right to be human, that you are here to compassionately care for that small vulnerable part of yourself. Your worth as a human being can never be lost, even when you get caught up in negative emotions, even when you make mistakes, even when others judge you. Continue to breathe these wounded emotions into your heart and let them wash through you and out in their own time. Trust the power of your heart, this great ocean of limitless loving compassion.

☉ Imagine the emotion as yourself as a small child crying out to your conscious awareness for help and love. Remember, this mind is your mind. Don't pass the responsibility for caring for it onto somebody else. This is called "giving your power away," because not taking responsibility also means not connecting to your Higher-Consciousness. Get in touch with what you, this little vulnerable emotional self would need from you, a being of consciousness, if this were the case. This is not easy at first because we have be-

come used to just disregarding our emotions or unconsciously going on the defensive as soon as we feel them. To help you get in touch with the needs of your vulnerable human self ask yourself these three questions:

1. How do I feel?
2. What are the needs I was trying to get met?
3. How was I trying to get them met by being dependent on others?

☉ When we were emotionally upset as a small child we didn't need to be "fixed" in the form of advice or solutions. That comes after a connection has been made if we need it. At first we just wanted to be held, to be heard, to feel worthy again. We wanted to be accepted as we were in that moment. We wanted to feel like we were important to those around us. These old trapped emotional issues within us are still there being triggered because this process of acceptance and compassion wasn't done for whatever reason at the time the wound was created. Now you as the conscious adult self have the opportunity to be there for your own pain, just like being a compassionate parent to your own child self. You now have the opportunity to do some healing on this issue. Even if you can only access a small part of what you are feeling, at least you can be with that. These small healing opportunities add up over time to make a noticeable difference.

☉ Put aside your ego's need to blame or see yourself as a victim and instead ask yourself "What am I feeling in this issue? What need is not being fulfilled in this situation? How was I trying to get these needs met?" Keep coming back to these questions and do your best to stay in touch with what they bring up. Let go of your ego's need to get caught up in the issue. You are here to take care of your emotions and needs by first connecting to them and validating them.

☉ Continue to breathe into the emotions allowing them to flow naturally. Continue to put aside negative thoughts that want to block the emotional flow or judge you or others.

☉ Note any old memories that flow through with the emotions. Note any common themes to these memories and to what is occurring in your life now. Keep returning to the questions, "What am I feeling in this issue? etc." Be with yourself in that memory, like you are your own mentor, protector, parent, guardian angel. It is your memory, your mind. Once you have gained a deep awareness of the situation, go into the memory and rewrite it. A part of your mind, your human self is still stuck there in that memory waiting for someone to connect to it and take care of it, like a child waiting for its mother/father to

come to the rescue. This is the role your conscious self can play for your human self. Remember though. Don't try to fix yourself so much as open up to yourself with a loving accepting heart. The depth of connection is the most important healing element. While present in this connection, experiment with ways of taking care of your past self in the memory so that your past self feels supported, worthy and free again.

☉ When you have gained some skill with taking care of yourself in your memories, you may be ready to step into the power of forgiveness. Ultimately forgiveness is about setting yourself free. This is achieved by connecting with the humanness of the other significant people who may have hurt you in that memory. You must always say no to wrong behavior. Always do what you need to do to take care of yourself. At the same time though, keep your heart open to the person, knowing that they are human just like you. They may have been confused, but they are searching for love just like you. Ongoing resentment, anger and hate imprisons you in negativity and continues to harm you all the way to the very cells in your body. Your own mind is doing this to you now, even when the situation has passed. Accept the right of everyone to be human. Don't be stuck in a never-ending cycle of reaction. Take action to care for yourself by truly opening your heart to the humanness of others as you would want them to open to you. Free yourself from the curse of negativity. Remember though, this never negates saying no to wrong behavior. Also, let forgiveness unfold naturally through the genuine opening of your heart. You can't *do* forgiveness. You arrive at it through genuine healing and transcendence. This may take time.

☉ When we let go, observe, feel, experience and allow the emotions to flow freely within the loving space of our own consciousness, we discover they will tend to naturally find a place of equilibrium. From this space you will also find clarity and wisdom. As you practice this style of meditation you will increasingly connect and build active pathways to the higher compassion and intelligence of your Soul/Higher-Self that is always above the fear and confusion.

☉ This is why letting go of what we think we know and just feel is so important in meditation, which is the beginning of being able to be connected all the time, in other words, being connected to what is real within you. This is called transcendence. It is not as hard as you think, but it does take a rock-solid commitment to take full responsibility for your human self.

☉ This is a process of holding your heart open to yourself. This process

heals the fear and pain that is locked up in your memories. It deepens your trust and belief in yourself to take care of yourself in the face of any challenge. This gives you more confidence to step out into life free of unhealthy emotional dependency on other people, places and things. You have the power to love yourself back to wholeness. This unconditional love is found within your own inner-ocean of conscious awareness. Wisely giving love is so much easier once this inner-connection is made.

☺ At the end of the meditation, or even during, spend some time writing in your journal exploring those three questions as well as this forth question:

4. What ways can I take full responsibility for caring for these needs myself, which may include reaching out for help from those who can guide me in helping myself?

Part 5

Meditation for Worthiness

- ① Start with your breath and spend about five to ten minutes connecting to your body as with the Part 1 and 2 meditation.
- ② Now open up your mind to your imagination and think of all the things your heart desires. In other words, if you could do or be anything, what would this be? Spend some time with this and don't hold back.
- ③ Search for the dreams that match your heart's highest intent, the thing you would want to achieve as your highest goal. If you can't get in touch with that, start with any little thing that brings you joy.
- ④ Now spend some time dreaming this dream. See yourself having succeeded in this goal. Indulge yourself. Savor every nuance of the experience.
- ⑤ See, feel, experience yourself receiving the accolades, the love and the praise.
- ⑥ Spend time feeling how worthy and strong you feel having achieved these goals, having triumphed over adversity, being important and admired, having achieved the loving relationship that you have longed for etc.
- ⑦ Don't get caught up into trying to figure out how this is going to be achieved in the "real world". This is irrelevant. Knowing how it is to be done is your Soul's business.
- ⑧ Instead, take this dream and the feelings of self-worth and wholeness that it generates within you and breathe it deeply into your heart in this now moment. Say to yourself as you breathe in this dream something like, "I am worthy of this achievement (name your specific achievement) and all its benefits right now this moment. I am worthy of all love, honor and abundance right now as I am. I love and honor myself now and in every moment. I thank the Universal Consciousness for giving me the opportunity to fulfill my potential."
- ⑨ Breathe this empowering belief as deeply into your heart as you can and hold it there. Stay connected to the dream, keep seeing and experiencing yourself having achieved this great goal and receiving its benefits. Keep breathing it even deeper into your heart along with the empowering affirma-

tions (experiment with different affirmations to see what is more powerful – you will feel it). Keep holding it there in your heart and allow this energy to heal anything that is blocking your heart.

☉ The important point of this exercise is that if you can dream these dreams then they are already part of your potential, and you are already worthy of these achievements. They are already part of your Soul’s intent, your essence, otherwise you would not have dreamt it. Furthermore, these dreams do not have to be precise – the “right” dreams in other words. Let your dreams evolve. Let this dreaming connect you more and more to the essence of your Soul, the greatness that you are.

☉ We do not achieve our goals or reach our potential because throughout our formative years we have become very confused. We have taken on the belief that we are unworthy to receive the love and fulfillment that is freely available to us in this world right now and in every moment. Know that these beliefs in our unworthiness are not true no matter how many mistakes we have made in the past, and no matter how many people have disapproved of us in the past or even now. These beliefs in our unworthiness are what undermine our achieving our potential, our goals. We have become so confused that we think we have to do something or achieve something to be worthy. Remembering your worthiness now, reclaiming your natural state of being of complete wholeness - nothing missing, allows you to regain the power to succeed that has always been yours but was lost due to your confusion. Reclaim your worthiness now and success will be automatic as this truth begins to overtake the old habitual confusion. Further more, your life will naturally change even faster as you *act* from this knowing of your wholeness, despite what your old beliefs say.

☉ Sometimes when we do this exercise it opens the door to the release of emotional pain that has been trapped within us, caused by our belief in our unworthiness, which in turn causes us to take to heart the criticisms of others. This is good. Allow this pain to wash out. Help it by breathing it into your heart of compassion. You are healing. At this point move on to Part 4, ‘Meditation for Emotional Healing.’ When you feel the pain subsiding and your compassion for yourself return, go back to your dream and continue your worthiness meditation.

☉ Exploring these dreams will also help you get to know yourself better. Allow them to evolve as you grow. Do not judge them as silly or frivolous. Often they tell us about how we are searching for love. Pay attention to this.

They will show you how you need to love yourself more. Have fun with your childhood fantasies. In some way your dreams all point to the essence of who you truly are. They will reveal your Soul's intent for you in this life.

☺ Pain may be a doorway to your Soul, but so is joy. Follow your joy, discover yourself and have fun in the process. This will also help you be more in touch with your joy every day and be more sensitive to how your Soul is guiding you every day. You may not realize it but your Soul would much rather guide you with joy than with pain. Joy is much more efficient. However, due to our confusion there will no doubt be pain, but we can at least balance this out more. As you continue to grow, joy will increasingly become your motivating force because you will not have to wait for the pain before you are willing to follow your heart. However, do not think that your Soul or some god causes your pain. Only a fear-based mind can create pain - a mind in confusion.

☺ Remember to let go of how you are going to achieve these goals. It is also irrelevant whether you achieve them in this life. By continuing to reclaim your God-given worthiness in the now moment you will empower your self-esteem, self-confidence and creative ability. Moving toward your goals and personal potential day-by-day is the essential thing. We must enter the journey before we can get to the goal. It is a matter of first things first. Then it is a matter of never stop learning and never give up.

☺ Your meditation practice can help you to weed out negative thought patterns by replacing them with conscious positive thoughts, based in universal truth. What you think on a consistent basis, you create. However, don't underestimate the negative creative power of your unconscious mind. Your power of conscious thought must overtake what the unconscious mind is habitually creating.

☺ Also, another powerful element to add to this meditation is gratitude. Spend time thinking about and thanking spirit/universal consciousness for all the things in your life that you can be grateful for, even the little things. Remember, what you focus on, you create or increase if you already have it. This gratitude can also extend to the vision of what you want to achieve. Thank spirit for this vision as though you have already achieved it to remove any doubt in your unconscious mind that this vision can be achieved. If you can envision it, you already have it on some metaphysical level, and you are already worthy of it. Your persistence will inevitably draw it into the physical. It is part of your natural potential. This is a Cosmic law. Develop an attitude of gratitude.

Other Facets of Meditation

Using music to facilitate meditation

Music can be used to greatly enhance your meditation experience. Some different ways music can be used are: Getting in touch with your emotions, lifting your spirits, relaxation, concentration and imagery.

Getting in touch with your emotions: If you are finding it hard to connect to your emotions so they can flow through and out of your system then look for a piece of music that does this job for you. Personally I tend to use the Dire Straits song, “Brothers in arms” 1. This song nicely opens up the old wounded warrior in me. The song, and Mark Knopfler’s guitar playing, is mournful and deeply compassionate. I put the song on repeat and let it resonate through me while I breathe my emotions into my heart from where they are then healed and dissipated as with Stage 4 of the meditation process.

Lifting your spirits: When I want to connect into my Soul, my higher-consciousness, I look for a piece of music that will uplift me. I often do this after spending time getting in touch with my emotions. I like to use a collection of poems written by the 14th Century Sufi poet, Rumi, which have been set to beautiful music 2. Rumi’s poems center around his love affair with his Soul/Higher-self. His poems are very devotional with a mystical flavor, while also being very sensual – an energy the music also reflects. This music helps to open my heart to love and inspiration. It is a matter of finding what works for you.

Relaxation: Relaxation music has become very popular so it is easy to find CDs and tapes produced just for this purpose. Therefore, playing this type of music while practising Stage 1 and 2 of the meditation exercise described above will have a good effect. Doing this regularly will reduce stress, muscle tension, headaches etc. as well as increased health and vitality.

The importance of relaxation meditation is allowing your mind to completely let go of everything but your breathing. There is only the now moment and your breath. Let your body fully relax, let go of any doing thoughts, let go of responsibilities, even let go of your identity. In this space nothing matters—you are literally on another plane of existence where the hassles of the world become inconsequential. This allows your nervous system to repair itself and your conscious awareness to rise above the ego. Even let yourself drift off to sleep if you need to.

Concentration: Learning to focus your mind in a one-pointed manner is very important when it comes to connecting to yourself on deeper, more power-

ful levels. However, this must not completely replace emotional processing and integration. Some of us have a natural ability with concentration and mistake it for the whole process due to the powerful effects it can awaken us to. The danger though is a repression of our human emotions because of our desire to hang on to this tranquil state of mind. Sometimes emotional energy is even judged as inferior and disregarded. This can tend to close our heart off from our human self and from relationship intimacy. As a result we do not develop true integration and mastery over our emotional nature, which is essential for radiating unconditional love to the world.

The essential role concentration has is to develop a strong ability to hold our observing consciousness steady whilst remaining open on all levels within the protective aura of our Higher-Self. With this power of concentration we can keep the connection to our Higher-Self in place while penetrating deeply into our unconscious mind. In our everyday life we learn to consistently direct our mind where we want to go. Achieving our goals is the result.

Again, this is often hard to do without a bit of help. Enjoyable music can be used as a point of focus. Do this by letting yourself be totally submerged in the music so you don't miss a single note or a word. It usually helps to repeat the same piece over and over. Then spend some time in silence and notice how your mind is more able to hold its focus.

It is also useful to meditate on a song that has great meaning over and over so the wisdom of the words can penetrate deeper and deeper into your consciousness. This is the same principle as listening to spoken teaching and motivational recordings. However, music and poetry have their own added qualities that enable them to effectively connect directly into your heart.

Imagery: While submerging yourself into a song or a pure musical piece you may find it easier to invoke imagery in your mind. To be able to call up and hold images in your mind is a form of concentration. Your Soul/Higher-self can use this skill to great effect, such as with connecting you, the conscious observer, with your inner-child, spirit guides or other meaningful experiences. When you can hold an image steady in your mind you may find these imaginary scenes taking on a life of their own while at the same time taking you on amazing journeys.

Journaling-a fast track to calmness and insight

Journaling, when linked with the meditation process, is a very powerful tool for quickly calming the mind and accessing your positive creativity. After you have spent time with Parts 1 and 2 of the meditation process, start writ-

ing in your journal any thoughts that persistently enter your mind. Once you write something down, drop back into the meditation and wait for the next thought that pushes its way into the silence. After some time, pay attention to any themes or patterns in the thoughts, such as worry or regret. You can then meditate on what you need to do to take positive care of these issues in the spirit of acceptance and personal responsibility. Meditation ensures that your Higher-Consciousness is doing the creative thinking, and the journal becomes a tool that your Higher-Consciousness readily puts to use. This helps to take care of and dissipate any negative energy, and builds a conscious relationship with your total self.

This method is also good if you tend to fall asleep in meditation. The act of writing your persistent thoughts down creates an alertness in your mind.

Another way of bringing calmness to your mind and thus making it easier to work with is meditating while looking into a beautiful picture. This can be an inspiring art work or a beautiful scenery, for example. While keeping your journal in your lap and pen at hand, let yourself become part of that picture. Breathe into your heart the serenity of this scene. Don't wish you were there. In your meditation *be* there. While you are breathing as per Part 1. of the meditation exercise and drinking in the beauty of the picture as a gift to yourself, you will experience your more conscious self finding gaps in your busy mind to access your compassion and wisdom. Again use your journal to work with persistent thoughts.

Using Mantras

At times there is no access to recorded music. Instead you can put your own internal dialogue to good use. A mantra is a short phrase, usually filled with spiritual or personally positive meaning. Repeating this mantra to yourself, or even out loud, over and over again becomes the source of concentration in the meditation. This blocks out the negative content of your lower mind and fills your mind with this positive energy instead. As a result, the body gets a rest from the toxic effect of negative thoughts and old mental habits begin to die away.

Your mantra can be something of great spiritual meaning such as "Om Mani Padme Hum," which comes from Buddhism and means *Oh to the jewel in the lotus*. This mantra defies a simple interpretation because it encapsulates the deepest essence of the Buddhist teaching. In simple terms though it could be said that the one chanting the mantra with aware consciousness recognizes and honors the divine nature of all beings, including oneself. Or you can use something like "May all beings be in the peace of their divine spirit."

It can be something more personal such as “I am a child of the universe, I am worthy of the Unconditional Love of Spirit now and always, ” or even more to the point, “I am unconditional Universal Love.”

Do your best not to lose touch with the impact of the meaning as you are repeating it. Also be ready to receive any reactions from your wounded human emotional self. Work through resistance from the old self-defeating belief patterns that may be stirred up by the Mantra. Take care of your vulnerable or resistant human mind but don't let it control you. You are an aware conscious being. Choose from your heart what you feel is the highest path for you without losing touch with your humanness, and ensure that this becomes your life's journey.

Mindfulness

Meditation is not just a time you sit and focus inward for a while. When you get up and go about your day, take your meditation focus with you. Stay in the now, stay in your breath, stay present in your observing self. When you make an effort to do this, you ensure your power of conscious awareness will become your normal mode of operation. This is called mindfulness, and is ultimately what meditation is trying to achieve.

You will be more aware of when your lower mind falls into negative reaction due to its unhealthy dependencies. As soon as you feel this, drop straight into your deep, slow breath, open up and feel directly into what you are resisting. Your lower mind can never dominate you if you keep up this practice all day. If you persist, your power of conscious awareness will be more and more your normal state of being, resulting in consistent states of calmness, poise, clarity and peace of mind. No situation, no matter how challenging, will unbalance you for long. Living continually in an aware state of Beingness can be your ultimate meditation goal. When you reach a good level of this consistent conscious awareness, the limitlessness of your potential begins to feel very real indeed.



Essential Elements of Meditation

Breath - The Keystone of Concentration

Center yourself in your body in the present moment by focusing on your breath.

Step 4. of the 5 Step Process



The Window of Observation

Seat of Expanding Consciousness. All is experience.

Observe without judgment.

Step 5. of the 5 Step Process

The first Pillar is Acceptance

As a human being you and all other beings are totally worthy of Universal Love now and always.

Step 1. of the 5 Step Process

The second Pillar is Emotional Responsibility

Take total compassionate responsibility to care for all that you do, think, feel, and say.

Step 2. of the 5 Step Process

The Sanctuary of the Heart

Where your wounded and vulnerable human self is welcomed, loved and cared for. Breathe your wounded vulnerable human self into your heart now that you have safely opened the door of contemplation constructed of Loving Acceptance and Compassionate Responsibility. Let the emotion/feeling flow and be released. Hold any confused thought up to the Light of Truth.

Step 3. of the 5 Step Process

Practising Meditation

Contemplation/Insight Meditation:

To begin with it is important to find, if you can, a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. Any time in the morning, day or evening is suitable so long as some quality time is given over to deep contemplation. Creating a daily routine is essential for such practices to have a real positive effect on your life. It is also most effective to do this meditation as close to when a conflict within the mind arises, therefore catching the emotions in play.

You don't have to impress anybody by sitting in the lotus position but if that is what you're used to then that is fine. Any relaxed position will do, although sitting up is preferable. If you fall asleep then obviously you needed it. If you keep falling asleep maybe you need to get real and slow down a bit. Another reason for repeatedly falling asleep is a phenomenon known as "sinking mind". This is often the result of fatigue due to over thinking, even though the body is rested. This can be countered by practicing relaxation, energizing and concentration techniques such as prolonged deep breathing to slow your head down while at the same time boosting your energy.

Accepting and paying attention to whatever is blocking the process is important to finding the answers that best fit your situation. Getting frustrated because your meditation is not going the way it "should" is defeating the purpose. Everything is included in the meditation experience as valid and worthy of contemplation.

Now that you have created the time and are comfortable, center yourself in your breath, with your eyes closed if it helps. A number of slow deep breaths are good to start with, to get a good dose of oxygen into your brain. Throughout your meditation keep at least twenty percent of your conscious awareness on your breath. This anchors your mind to the now moment. It is only by fixing your consciousness to the central point of the now moment can you effectively observe your turbulent mind without being swept away by it. Therefore every time you lose your focus, come back to your breath and re-connect to your conscious Self from there.

Next you need to cultivate an attitude of complete acceptance of your humanness and all that life presents to you. Within this attitude also reaffirm your commitment to take full responsibility to care for your emotional reactions and confused thoughts.

This attitude of loving kindness and responsibility is essential. More

than anything else the quality and effectiveness of your meditation will depend on this right attitude. Fighting against reality or judging yourself in any way will block your ability to connect to your higher consciousness and thus see the reality of any situation. As a result we will keep getting caught up in our same old confusion. When we look back at our life and see the self-defeating ways we have reacted we must also be able to see and accept that vulnerable and innocent human behind the reactions who is just looking for love, who just got confused. The more we can accept, forgive and have compassion for our humanness, the easier it is to accept life as it is and effectively work with it.

Also, just forcing the mind to be still and/or flying off into other states of consciousness is not enough. Escaping from your humanness in this way can lead to some levels of self-mastery but it is very slow and limited. To truly know, heal and integrate something is to enter into it and experience it with conscious awareness and the intent to observe it on its own terms.

This right attitude of loving acceptance and emotional responsibility is the container that you place around all your reactive energies. It is like placing an angry, sad and confused child in an enclosed play area. You then get in there with the child and just watch with an open heart and mind. You are not judging the child, you are seeking to understand that child and slowly but surely establish lines of connection and trust. By taking time to observe and get to know this child you will naturally gain insight into the nature of his or her behavior—the behavior of your own human self. Only then do you lovingly, gently engage the child with this new insight and then observe once again to see if this has a positive effect. The child is your confused emotional human self, and the observer is your higher-consciousness. You reach this state of higher-consciousness by practicing self-acceptance and emotional responsibility.

Therefore this compassionate inner-space is built by practicing Steps 1 and 2, which prepares us for Step 3's letting go and tuning in. Step 3 is the meditation. This enables you to work with your reactive energies within this container for the sake of healing and wisdom. In other words, your conscious awareness is compassionately enveloping your reactive emotions and confusion, rather than being overtaken by the wayward mind. This right attitude will also protect you from the negativity of others.

It may also help you to use your imagination to create a sacred and peaceful place in your mind, your own style of play pen, such as a beautiful natural landscape—a place of sanctuary. You can begin your connection with

yourself there, where you then open into your old issues and memories. This can help your Higher-Self connect to you in visual ways within this “mindscape.” You can then take your child/human self back to this place of sanctuary now and then in order to give him or her some nurturing love and healing. Visualization is not essential though, and it is not always easy to achieve. It usually takes a lot of practice. If you have pressing emotional issues and visualization does not come easy for you, then it is best to get on with meditating on your issues and leave such visualization practice for another time.

Practicing the meditation

Having cultivated the right attitude, centered your mind to your breath, and therefore your body. Study again Parts 1 & 2 of the *5 Part Meditation Process* if you need to. Gently let your thoughts and emotions freely rise to the surface of your awareness. Use your in-breath to open yourself into yourself—to welcome your human self into your heart of compassion. It is important to treat these thoughts and emotions simply as energy, free of any kind of judgement.

You can imagine that they are just like clouds slowly passing by against a blue sky. You can no more interact with these thoughts and emotions than with those clouds - all you can do is watch, even though you can still feel all that the clouds contain. Being able to feel is of course essential for getting to know yourself. Sometimes a cloud will be more like a storm, and for a time the blue sky will seem like it has been blotted out. However, even storms pass eventually. The blue sky is always there. The blue sky therefore is reality, the passing clouds are the products of your confused mind. They are the confused child running around the play pen kicking the toys.

Of course this is the ideal. In reality we are going to follow anything but the ideal. It is this lack of discipline that we are most interested in observing, because it will reveal to us the areas we need to work on.

For example: Let us say I am having an ongoing conflict with someone close to me such as a long-term friend. The relationship has always been a bit strained and I often find it hard to communicate to this person. Once again this person has done something inconsiderate “to me” and I am feeling hurt and angry.

The first thing my mind is going to want to do when I begin my contemplation is continually run scenarios past me about how I am going to give this friend of mine a good talking to, along with countless combinations

of what I am going to say and how this person is likely to respond and how I would like this person to respond and how we are likely to argue yet again because this person is going to play the usual avoidance games, but this time I'm going to out-smart these games but I never have in the past and I'm getting frustrated just thinking about it and my mind is racing faster and faster and for god's sake let's get off this merry-go-round!

I have allowed my mind to get dragged off its center of neutral observation. I allowed this to happen by getting caught up in the situation and the other person. I started judging this person. Of course judging is human, however, it is possible, with practice, to observe myself judging without getting caught up in it—I can see the judging for the confusion that it is. Ultimately I do not know why my friend behaves that way and neither does my friend. It is beyond our awareness. More importantly, I do not know why I am affected by my friend this way. I don't even know why I stick around this person. Perhaps it is about time I stopped trying to figure out and control the other person and have a good look at what is going on in my own mind. My own mind is the only thing I have any power to really change, and I am hardly going to gain the awareness I need to gather in that power if I am continually fixated on things that are beyond my control!

I therefore make a vitally important decision. I let go of the situation and my friend and concentrate solely on my own emotional reactions and the confused thoughts that generate them. I have just performed a technique described by the ancient Chinese Alchemists as "the backward flowing" 3. Whilst I am allowing myself to be taken away by those things I have no control over, the "energy" of awareness is being lost, and only serves to fan the fires of my wayward emotions, which in turn burn up my serenity. By consciously stopping this loss of vital awareness I bring this energy back to myself and thus a nucleus of this awareness energy forms in my mind. Providing I continue to practice this mindfulness, this nucleus will expand into a blazing light that will, in time, safely penetrate and enable healing to occur in the deepest darkness of my shadowy unconscious. I have in fact opened the door to my Soul, my Higher-Self, from where my true consciousness flows.

Now that I have taken this great step, the game is underway. So I sit in my anger and frustration with intentions of observing it from the lofty and placid heights of my Soul-consciousness. Just then an urgent and dominant voice pushes in and insists that I shouldn't think those thoughts about my friend and proceeds to club me about the head with copious amounts of guilt.

Immediately I am thrown into a stream of emotional memories associated with past misdeeds that I should feel guilty about and before I know it I am being sucked into a quicksand of self-judgement and depression, only to be tossed back out by feelings of resentment and indignation about those bastards who made such a fool of me back in the summer of 78, and I am thinking of how I should have decked the big guy before they got the better of me and I discover I am a million miles away from my center of awareness again.

I am left wondering where all that stuff came from, as though out of the blue. I have in fact stumbled upon an emotional behavior pattern. When a particular situation occurs I react in a typical way, which then triggers off a typical counter reaction in those I have a conflict with, which leads to another episode of emotional turmoil within my own mind. As I contemplate on the emotions and leave the situations in the background I discover the same set of emotions driving my reactions each time, and I wonder how far back this emotional trigger goes. I never really made the connection before because of my fixation on the situation, on what that so and so person said and did! As a result of this new light of awareness I get a glimpse of the fact that my current emotional upset doesn't really have much to do with what is going on at this moment. My reactions are being driven by some past undealt-with hurt. All that "pop psychology" starts to make a bit more sense. My head and heart merge a little.

Another insight appears in my consciousness revealing to me that this is the reason I have such difficulty communicating with my friend. Her personality triggers my emotional baggage, restricting my consciousness to the point of only being able to view the situation through my past hurts, and therefore never being able to have a choice about how I respond. I see now why this relationship is so important. I almost look forward to seeing this person again in order to observe myself in action, to observe the emotions as they arise.

In response to this insight I grab a pen and paper and begin to write about these emotions, expressing them in words just as they were back then, thus revealing them to the light of day. I find myself being drawn into a time tunnel that takes me back into my past again. I contemplate some more on what I find, and then write some more when insight arises. I write as an angry twenty-year-old, an angry sixteen-year-old, and angry seven-year-old etc.

Then I list the generalized beliefs that have formed around this old pain and do some more writing about this. While exploring this I realize it is this confused habitual thinking that continues to perpetuate my disturbing emo-

tions. Present situations simply trigger these self-defeating thought patterns.

That week I am excited by what I have discovered. "I have broken the back of a behavior pattern," I say to myself. "I am free of it!" That weekend I see my friend and we have another argument. To my dismay I find myself lost in another wave of anger and frustration. Where was my observing self? What happened to all my awareness? I find myself once again despondent and depressed. Once again I have made a "fool of myself". Three days later I realize that I am beating myself up again and so get back to my meditation. I pick up that book I keep beside my bed, the one that seems to match so well with this stuff I am dealing with. Reading the words of wisdom gets me centered again and so I put it down and resume my contemplation as more insight begins to arise.

I resist the temptation to expect to find all the answers in a book. No book is that good. I also resist the temptation to pick up the phone and have a bitch-session to one of my friends. I'll call later, after I have taken responsibility for this stuff. I'll call that friend who I so often avoid because she has this knack of seeing straight through me. Now that I am getting honest with myself, I realize she is the best friend I have.

In my contemplations I remember reading somewhere that our heads always move faster than the rest of us. I thought I had it all figured out but it was only in my head. I had underestimated how deep all this stuff goes. I realize that my mistake had a lot to do with my inner-child wanting instant gratification again, or was it my critical-parent-self telling me that I should have it all sewn up by now? I now realize why all those visits to new-age type healers only had a limited effect. I was hoping for an instant fix. I didn't really want to take responsibility for it myself. I didn't want to do the work of consciously uncovering the hurt, layer by layer, and seeing it for what it is. I kept giving my power away to others, even if they were telling me to stand on my own two feet. Funny how these things now start to make sense. I'd heard it all before but didn't really take any notice. I thought they were talking about someone else.

As I make the connection again with this emotional pattern I am able to appreciate what I have to deal with. When I argue with my friend, I am also arguing with half-a-dozen other people, especially my brother, which is where it all started. I see now that it is pointless to beat myself up because I haven't turned myself around in a day.

The knowledge I have about the integration process now begins to rise to the surface of my mind. I can't expect much in the beginning. First comes

awareness but this is not powerful enough to remain in the moment of the arising emotions. So here I am contemplating it all after the event. But that's OK because my awareness will be that much stronger now, and if I keep practicing emotional responsibility, soon I will actually be able to change the way I respond to my friend in the moment. Maybe my friend will respond differently as a result, maybe not. This is beyond my control. I will be free in myself, that is the main thing.

I am getting a sense for how delicate my connection with insight is. The moment my ego jumps in to try to “fix” things, the connection is lost. In this neutral space of contemplation I am free to think but it is almost like my Soul does the thinking. I am not trying to think in the sense of trying to force a solution or trying to control something. Instead I am holding open the door of my inner-sanctuary of healing for the Light of reality to shine in. And when an insight comes it is so complete. It is like a thousand thoughts in an instant and so subtle a spark of energy. This insight also has the quality of having taken all sides of the situation into account. It is as though all the Souls involved in the situation get together and figure it all out. When the insight touches my mind it is so refined that my clumsy rational mind struggles to hold onto it. If I don't quickly write it down I can forget it in no time. Even then I realize that I often don't fully understand it until I actually go out and experience it, and this may take some time. The message seems to contain what I need for every level of my being. I am getting a sense of the quality of unified transcendental consciousness as it is sensed in the mind. I also get images, symbolic in nature - so hard to understand at times, becoming obvious only in time. Sometimes the meaning hits me straight away.

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Notice how my contemplation meditation and my daily life merged into one. When we accept the responsibility of taking care of our emotions and thoughts our whole life becomes different forms of mindfulness meditation. Our center of awareness becomes a compassionate space in our consciousness where we try to reside in always. Whatever enters this space of enlightened awareness naturally begins to heal.

In the beginning, because it is new, remaining in this space can be difficult and effortfull, or so it seems. If we are not careful we can end up struggling and warring against ourselves and others again. It is important to accept the emotions that we have in the moment. This does not mean

we are going to act them out. It means that we are accepting our humanness with a commitment to take conscious and responsible loving care for it. Much of the stress we cause ourselves comes from that critical-self in our head saying that we shouldn't think this way or that. This is silly because we *are* thinking this way. We *are* experiencing this emotion. This is the reality of this moment. We need to bring ourselves back to the space of not judging this energy. Instead we allow ourselves to rest in it, observe it, feel it. We listen to what our disturbed emotions are saying to us. We observe how paying attention to our emotions leads us back to our confused thinking, where the problem really lies. At the same time, in this space of self-acceptance we form a clearer line of communication with our Soul—our Light of conscious compassion, awareness and insight.

Accepting our emotions into our awareness does not mean that we have to believe what our confused thoughts are telling us, as though we can't question these fear-based outbursts. Our confused thoughts tell us little in the way of facts about other people and situations. What they do tell us is the nature of our own fears and insecurities. We still have to learn the difference between emotion and feeling, our wounded inner-child and our Soul.

The significant thing about Soul, our true conscious awareness, is that it never judges in the sense of making others or ourselves wrong. Soul discerns the true nature of things and the prompts us to act with this knowing in a way that is for the highest good of all, which often confronts our frightened, judging little ego.

When we allow ourselves to be real in this contemplative way, our heart merges with our Soul and we find compassion for ourselves, which strengthens our self-acceptance. Our intellect merges with our Soul and insight comes. Our stress levels drop. We have a good cry or laugh or both. The energy is freed up and some more of our emotional baggage is healed and harmonized into love and wisdom. It is our fear and shame that prevent us from wanting to face our emotions and the mental confusion that keeps them trapped, thus seeing the reality of them. Don't forget that if we don't face our fears, our emotions forever remain strangers to us. Our confused thoughts remain in reckless control of our lives. In other words, we remain a stranger to ourself. My illusions are then projected out onto the world, especially my loved ones.

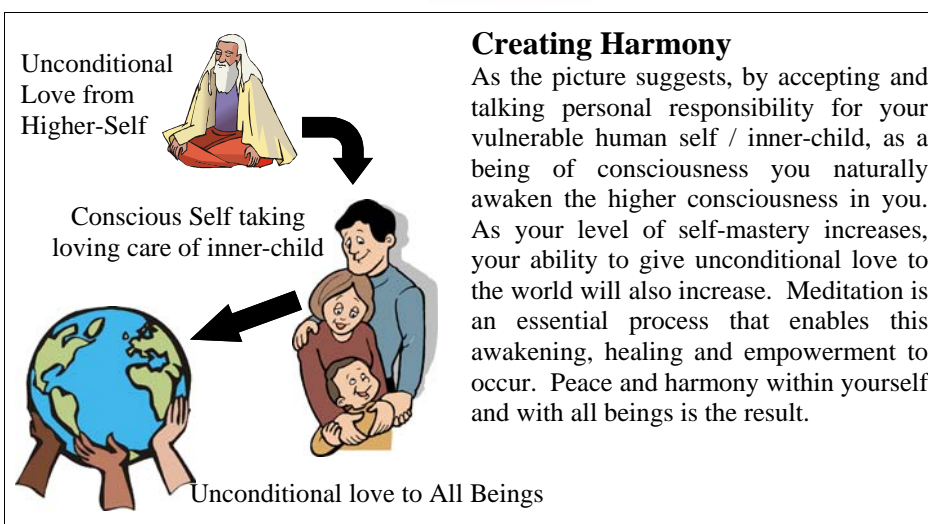
Also notice how I used a self-help book and my journal in conjunction with my meditation. Reading and writing are also forms of meditation and combining the three strengthens the process considerably.

The whole meditation process can be summarized in these four questions:

- 1. What do I feel?**
- 2. What are my needs that are at the bottom of these Feelings?**
- 3. How was I trying to get these needs met at the time?**
- 4. How can I take full conscious responsibility for these needs now?**

Taking full responsibility is achieved by breathing our emotion and thought energy into our heart of compassion while letting everyone and everything that may have triggered that energy go. This enables our own Light of Wisdom to sort through this energy unhindered by our ego mind. To aid this process our ego mind must keep the door to our heart and observing consciousness open while not being tempted to “fix” anything, which is a hard enough job on its own.

With enough practice, our fears and insecurities will be revealed and embraced by our Higher-Consciousness. Universal Loving Compassion and Wisdom will heal this wounded child within us, resulting in inner-strength, clarity and serenity. What will be left are our genuine needs that we need to take action to sort out in the world, along with some insights as to how to do this with love and wisdom.





5 KEYS TO CARING FOR YOURSELF

1. Daily Journal

Keeping a daily journal is the corner-stone to caring for ourselves. Finding the discipline to keep a daily journal can be difficult at first. Our initial resistance is a good indication as to how much we have learned to habitually tune out from ourselves. We habitually look for love outside of us. We are looking for someone else to take responsibility for us. Sitting down at our journal each day is like sitting down over coffee, as the conscious self, with our friend, our human self. If we resent our friend then we are not going to be motivated to spend time with him/her. When we are in our victim thinking the wounded inner-child, who still lives inside our mind, is running the show. Our inner-child is always looking for someone else to take over the responsibility of caring for it. This is as it should be if we are a child. However, now that we are adults, such thinking is self-destructive. The adult in us must now learn to lovingly care for our inner-child. Personal responsibility is about caring for ourselves.

Your life is your business and you are the manager. It is your responsibility to ensure that you don't end up emotionally and spiritually bankrupt. Love, harmony and abundance is already yours. The doorway to all this is within the heart of you and your conscious awareness and action is the key.

Writing in a journal is about:

- Getting to know yourself.
- An opportunity to plan your day.
- An opportunity to express, get in touch with, and define your emotions.
- Keeping track of emotional issues that tend to build up and interfere with your peace of mind and wellbeing and to explore ways of taking care of these emotions.
- Uncovering and challenging self-defeating beliefs/perceptions and negative self-talk.
- Setting goals and assessing your progress each day with an attitude of self-acceptance.
- Getting in touch with your Higher Wisdom by simply endeavoring to take responsibility for the challenges in your life. This can come in

the form of:

- o Reminding yourself of the principles of lovingly caring for yourself.
- o Letting go of your need to blame or judge situations as wrong, and focus on what your needs are and how to take action to take care of them.
- o Contemplating on the solutions rather than dwelling on what you perceive are the problems.

This is your own personal work-book. No one is going to mark it. We don't have to write things that are profound - we often do when we don't mean to. It is about keeping a focus on our personal growth—keeping yourself pointed consistently in the right direction. It is particularly about self-acceptance and personal responsibility. If you persist, in a short time writing in your journal will become a treasured and routine part of the day. It is also a good reality check because neglecting your journal is a sure indication that you are neglecting yourself. Keeping a daily journal is a way of getting comfortable with ourselves and once we get settled into the routine it only takes a couple of pages a day to stay in touch.

When you can consistently accept yourself as you are, and keep a daily focus on your life, you can, one day at a time, make great changes in your life.

Meditation: Meditation can also be a part of this process. Meditation is about being totally present and tuned into ourselves without judging what we experience. It is about getting to know ourselves, accept ourselves and work with what we find. If you combine meditation with journaling and reading you have for yourself a powerful process that will effectively reprogram your mind and change your life.

2. Education and Inspiration

Studying self-care and self-empowerment books is essential to our personal growth and wellbeing. Look at this statement carefully. Note how I used the word "study" and not just "read." When we study something we read it more than once and even make our own notes. It is of little use to read a self-help book like a novel and then expect it to make a difference to your life. We must study such books, do the exercises and endeavor to put them into practice. If we do this, the same book will reveal more and more to us each time we reread it. This is how we learn anything. The same goes for self-help videos and tapes. This is the only sure way to reprogram our minds - to kick out those old self-defeating mindsets that keep blocking us from love, serenity,

joy, and abundance.

Another thing to note about the first statement is the distinction I made between "self-care" and "self-empowerment" books. We need to learn how to take care of our inner-selves - our emotions and state of mind - by studying self-care books. We also need to learn how to effectively act and create in the world and to stay motivated, and we do this by studying self-empowerment books.

Few people stop to think that being inspired is our own responsibility, but accepting this responsibility may mean making the effort to find that person who has the right message for you, and the message you need to hear naturally changes as you change. It is all part of keeping our mind focused in the right direction. Persistent, consistent, focused thought inevitably manifests that thought into physical reality. Your unconscious mind is doing this for you all the time but it often creates what you, as the conscious self, don't want. Learn to create consciously and you will have what you want.

3. Counseling/Therapy/Life-Coaching

We are not failing by not being able to do it alone. What prevents us from seeking counseling is often our lack of self-worth. We feel this lack of self-worth in the form of shame. Shame is a very uncomfortable emotion to feel and we cope with this by covering it up with pride. Pride says we have to pretend we are OK when we know that we are really hurting. Pride was created by being expected, as a child, to get things right first time, instead of being able to discover life and ourselves through trial and error, which is the healthy and normal way to learn. We were expected to do the impossible. Pride prevents us from getting the care that we need. Allowing ourselves to stay trapped in negative emotions and self-defeating beliefs is very damaging to our wellbeing. It is literally toxic. Our lack of self-worth is something that we have learned over time. It is a confusion in the mind that can be healed.

We are all limited by our personal experiences and our perceptions. Every athlete who wants to reach a high standard needs a coach. We need to interact with someone who is trained in mental/emotional "fitness" to give us new information and a new perspective. Conscious Living is a skill like anything else, and these skills need to be learned in order to gain the fulfillment we are looking for. There is no one who would not benefit from working with a personal counselor/life-coach, and most highly successful people do just that.

4. Personal Sharing and Development Groups

Another way our fear traps us into self-destructive cycles is when we believe our mind when it says not to trust anyone. I often hear the statement, "I don't trust anyone I don't know?" How then are we going to get to know anyone new? How are we going to learn anything new? We also want people to be perfect in some way that suits our own particular comfort zone before we trust them. Such fears can only be overcome by learning to trust ourselves to know how to work with any new situation. We can always think of instances when people have hurt us, but when we think of these instances we don't take the next step and look at how we got ourselves into these situations in the first place. Also, the quality of our relationships reflects the quality of our relationship with ourselves. Once again it is time to stop being the victim and start taking care of ourselves.

It is not what happens to us, it is how we feel about it and deal with it that determines the quality of our experiences. Finding a personal sharing group to participate in enables us to be in a group of like-minded people who are making the effort to accept themselves and one another. When we make the effort to regularly attend such a group we quickly realize that we are not so different after all, that their stories are very similar to ours. We get to hear how they are putting the principle of personal care and self-empowerment into their lives and therefore learn from their experiences. We begin to feel more comfortable about ourselves through the loving acceptance of the others in the group and we link up with people who truly know how to care about us, because they are making the effort to care about themselves. We are nurturing ourselves by linking up to a loving community of positive people.

Participating on a weekly basis in such a group is one of the best ways of finding self-acceptance and the life-skills that you are looking for, which is essential for opening up to our own higher wisdom.

5. Look After Your Body

Another obvious tell-tale sign that we are not caring for ourselves is the way we take care of our bodies. I am not going to talk at length about diet and fitness. We all know what this means, and there are countless books on the market that can guide us in this area. As always, common sense is the key.

Consciously caring for ourselves includes going for regular walks, for example, and making the time to prepare wholesome meals. Neglecting our physical fitness, under-eating or over-eating, rigid and obsessive diets or frequently eating poor quality foods means that we need to accept and love ourselves more.

R&R - Rest and Recreation: We need to make a distinction between rest and recreation. Rest is about the cessation of activity. A round of golf is not rest, it is recreation. Rest is essential for healing and rejuvenation of body and mind. Rest in the form of meditation is one of the best ways to learn how to relax. Relaxation meditation is very easy to do. It is also very common place these days so finding a suitable meditation tape or someone to show you some simple techniques takes little effort. Just sitting on a grassy slope looking out over a lake is a relaxation meditation. Some forms of Yoga fit into this category as well. If you can't sit still for any length of time then you need to get in touch with why, because if you don't, you are liable to have a very short life.

Meditation is also about having a restful mind. We can have a restful mind while being active, and indeed this is the goal one would wish to achieve. A restful mind is a mind that has clarity, joy and detachment. Usually we have to start this practice sitting down and doing it in a more concentrated form before we are then able to take it into our daily activities. The 5-Step Process that you are beginning to learn by reading this book is a powerful meditation that we can take with us wherever we go.

Having fun is also essential for healing and rejuvenation. All too often we get on the treadmill of thinking that we can't be happy until we achieve this or that, or until a certain person treats us "properly". Meanwhile we are wasting our opportunity to enjoy life now. Happiness is a choice. It does not depend on outside circumstances. We can literally choose to have fun whenever we wish, and this is essential for inner-healing and personal growth. Our body and mind needs to rest and find enjoyment in order to have time to fully integrate our lessons in life and the expansion of consciousness this causes. We need to realize that when our mind changes, our body changes as well. The atomic structure of our bodies is actually going through an evolutionary process. Our body is denser and naturally takes longer than the mind to settle into the new ways of perceiving life.

If we don't make the time to rest and have fun we soon lose our motivation and vitality, and we may even burn out. Like a restful mind, a joyful mind is a clear mind. A clear mind is a creative mind - one that looks for solutions rather than worries about problems. Further more, once you have connected up to your personal sharing group, there will always be someone to share fun times with and with whom you can also be real.

You have everything you need within you and around you to take care of yourself and change your life!



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Other Booklets in the 5-Step Process series:

1. **5 Steps to Freedom: A path to inner harmony and personal growth.**
(An introduction to the 5-Step Process).
2. **Turning Conflict into Harmony: Building a relationship that works.**
3. **How to Succeed in Life by Following Your Heart: Working with a process to create balance and continual progress to achieve your goals.**
4. **5 Part Meditation for Awareness, Healing, Integration & Worthiness: Building inner harmony, balance and empowerment.**

Books by the same Author:

1. **Being Human: 5 Step Process for Healing, wisdom and empowerment.**
2. **5 Steps for Mastering Life: Living consciously in the 21st century.**

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Phil began his own inward journey of personal and spiritual development in 1984. With his natural abilities he soon found himself helping others do the same, with one to one counseling and group work. Over the years, Phil privately studied Existential Psychology, Theosophy, Buddhism, Metaphysics, and Hands-on Healing. He also completed a degree on the subject of Human Consciousness at the University of Queensland, which included Jungian and General Psychology. Phil now works at his own counseling and complimentary therapies center in Brisbane while writing and teaching on the subject of personal and spiritual development using, amongst other frameworks, the 5 Step Process, which he developed himself. The 5-Step Process is closely aligned to the school of Psychosynthesis, developed by Robert Assigioli.

Phil's skills include Transpersonal Psychotherapy, which includes orthodox counseling techniques and psychology training coupled with an extensive knowledge and practice of the ancient and sacred techniques and philosophy of spiritual integration. Phil is also a Dharma and meditation teacher, using contemporary Buddhist and Theosophical frameworks and also the 5-Step Process.

He is a dedicated practitioner of his own spiritual and personal healing, integration and development, which he regards as his most important source of training as a therapist and Dharma Teacher. He regards his life as a living meditation, seeking harmony with life on every level, allowing all life's experiences to be his teacher.