

This Week

Please continue with the meditation protocol we began last week. This will allow you to deepen in it.

As many of you know, as you get more into this practice, you can start to notice many ways to deepen it. As you begin meditation, follow the path from nasal passages to soft palate to Ajna to heart with soft yet precise focus. It's important to be precise in your dharana by paying close attention to the different parts of the pathway. As a session deepens and dharana becomes dhyana, the focal points may soften. There may be a sense of rising, dropping, expanding. The breath may begin to move within a tube-like 'inner body' between the Ajna and the Heart. Other signs of deepening and becoming more inward will occur, and at some point, during a session, the practice may morph, or you may be drawn simply to sit in stillness. This is fine and is part of the process of moving from dharana to dhyana to a deepening sense of absorption. As you keep returning to this practice over time, the pathways to deeper layers of the chakras in the head and heart begin to open. The different subtle 'textures' of these centers reveal themselves. You may have visual experiences, like seeing luminosity. Or the inner sensations may be energetic or more in the realm of feelings like peace. If you feel yourself moving into the peaceful flow state, let yourself rest there.

Asking a Question before Meditation

Is there a life issue or personal question you want wisdom about? Try making a request or asking a question about it before meditation. Something like, "*What is the truth about _____?*" "*What would be the best course of action for _____?*"

Ask the question (or write it down if you prefer) when you first close your eyes or between the pranayama part of your meditation and the beginning of your dharana. **DON'T THINK ABOUT THE QUESTION ONCE YOU HAVE ASKED IT!** Think of the question as a seed you are placing in consciousness. In that way, you allow the natural clarity of prajna to emerge and answer the question. (Once you ask it, answers may come not in meditation but later in the day. So, it's good to pay attention!)

After meditation, take a moment in your journaling to write down any insight that has come about the question. Or ask the question again and write whatever comes up. Of course, if a big revelation or answer arises during meditation itself, write it down right away and then return to meditation.

Open-Eyed Practice (Meditation snacking during the day)

Take 2–3-minute meditation breaks during the day when you turn in and follow the breath into the soft palate and Ajna, then the exhalation down to the heart.

As you walk, wash dishes, etc., focus on this breathing pattern with the mantra *Ham Sa*, or if you have a mantra you normally use, co-ordinate that with the breathing pattern.