

yeshe

Meditation is very simple. When hearing about meditation for the first time, you might think, "That must be very special; meditation couldn't be for me but only for special people." This just creates a gap between you and meditation.

Actually, watching television, which we all do, is a bit like meditating. When you watch television, you watch what's happening on the screen; when you meditate, you watch what's happening on the inner screen of your mind – where you can see all your good qualities, but all your inner garbage as well. That's why meditation is simple.

The difference, however, is that through meditation you learn about the nature of your mind rather than the sense world of desire and attachment. Why is this important? We think that worldly things are very useful, but the enjoyment they bring is minimal and transient. Meditation, on the other hand, has so much more to offer – joy, understanding, higher communication and control. Control here does not mean that you are controlled by somebody else but rather by your own understanding knowledge-wisdom, which is a totally peaceful and joyful experience. Thus, meditation is very useful.

Also, if you exaggerate the value of external objects, thinking that they are the most important things in life, you ignore your inner beauty and internal joyful energy; if you look only outside of yourself, you neglect your most precious human qualities – your intellect and your potential to communicate in higher ways. Thus, meditation shows you clean clear which objects of attachment confuse you and with which kinds of mind you relate to them.

Furthermore, meditation is a very quick method of discovering the nature of reality. It's just like a computer. Computers can check many things extremely quickly, put them together and all of a sudden, *pow!* – we're on the moon. Similarly, meditation can quickly make things clean clear, but we don't have to go to the trouble of learning by trial and error through laboratory experiments. Many people seem to think that making mistakes is a very important part of learning. My point of view is that this is a misconception. "To learn the reality of misery, you have miserable experiences" – I say that this is not so. Through meditation we can learn things clean clear, without having to experience them.

Thus, meditation does not mean the study of Buddhism philosophy and doctrine. It is learning about our own nature: what we are and how we exist.

Some books say that the purpose of meditation is to make us conscious, but despite the usual Western connotation, the terms "awareness" and "consciousness" are not necessarily positive. They can be selfish functions of the ego. Awareness and consciousness do not mean the fully awakened state of knowledge-wisdom. Awareness can be simply an ego-trip. I mean, many times we're aware and conscious, but since we possess neither wisdom nor understanding, our minds are still polluted. We think that we're conscious, but our minds are foggy and unclear. Therefore, awareness and consciousness are not exclusively the result of meditation.

What has to happen is that through meditation, awareness and consciousness must become knowledge-wisdom.

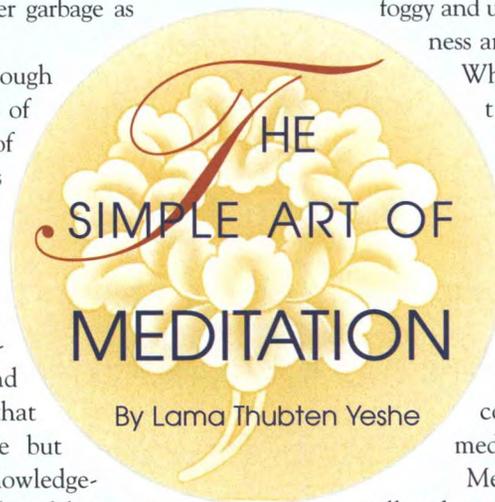
Another idea that many people have is that meditation is beautiful because it produces calm and relaxation. But calm and relaxation are not necessarily the result of meditation. For example, when we are asleep and our mind has sunk to an unconscious level, we are relaxed. Of course, this is not the same relaxation that meditation brings.

Meditation releases us from the uncontrolled, polluted mind. Automatically, we become joyful and can see meaning in our life. Hence, we can direct the energy of our body, speech and mind in beneficial directions instead of wasting it through not knowing what we want.

In fact, most of the time we don't know what we want. We try something, but then, "Oh, I don't want this." So we try something else, but again, "I don't want this either." Our life is constantly changing, changing, changing; again and again, our energies are sublimated into one thing, then another, and we reach nowhere – doesn't this sound familiar?

We should make sure we understand our behavior. We put ourselves on so many different trips and into so many life-situations with no understanding of what direction is really worth going in, thus wasting enormous amounts of time. Meditation purifies and clarifies our view, enabling us to understand the different life-styles and beliefs of basically every sentient being in the universe. Thus we can see which are worthwhile and which are not. A human being, sitting at one place in meditation, can see all this. It is definitely possible.

When our minds are clean clear, we can choose a beneficial way of life. ☸



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