

## **ON MEDITATION**

You are where your attention is

Attention is the link between our conscious mind, inner selves and outside universe. We become one with what captures our attention. Yet, our attention is often not where it should be. We need to know where our attention is in order to place it where it needs to be.

### **Just be**

We are always working, learning, acquiring, planning and worrying. We lose ourselves in this process of doing. Sometimes we have to stop doing and just let things happen. Relax, listen, absorb, accept and enjoy.

### **Nothing is trivial if you are focused**

When the mind dwells on recurring, random thoughts, it becomes difficult to quieten the mind. We have to stop and focus our attention on the present activity, no matter how insignificant it seems. When you are totally absorbed in a task, you won't experience disconnectedness, frustration or boredom. You, your tools and the task at hand become one. Intensely focused attention and minimum distractions are needed to achieve this state.

### **Sometimes you just know**

Our subconscious mind communicates with the conscious mind through intuition, inspiration, gut feelings and bodily sensations. Pay attention to them. They will guide you through the unknown.

### **Cultivate silence and solitude**

We compulsively do things to justify our existence. When we aren't doing anything, we feel purposeless. We do not know how to sit still and relax since we are uncomfortable with silence and solitude. In silence and solitude, listen to your inner voice. Reflect on your life, and you will know where you are and where you're headed. Reflection will lead to insights that will amaze you.

### **Relax first, then act**

We are generally stressed and when we have something important to do we become more tense. We assume that being tense will help us perform better. The opposite is the truth. Take a deep breath in, breathe out and visualize strength coming from your core (instead of your mind). Now, act.

### **Your daily activities are your meditation**

The way you live should reflect what you believe in and who you are. It is the outer manifestation of your inner being. Build congruity between your inner and outer selves to achieve peace.

### **Listen for the soft voice**

Focus on what is important and reduce unnecessary activities. Distractions and turmoil make it hard to hear intuition and insights. A soft voice can only be heard in a quiet, peaceful mind.

## **ON UNITY/ONENESS**

### **Every death should be put on trial**

Life is precious and should be respected in all its forms. All life is matter with spirit, and spirit is part of the Divine. Needless loss of life is unacceptable under any circumstance.

### **Spirituality and science are not in opposition to one another**

Attentive observation with the naked eye, microscopes, telescopes or other technology takes you into the realm of the unknown. The study of science and the latest research bring you closer to Divine truths. The study of the created is a direct path to the Creator.

### **The law of Karma applies to humans collectively**

Knowledge and awareness of the impact of our actions on our Earth are essential. The denial of facts, resistance to change and blaming will only dig our own graves. We are a single organism and the brain will not survive if the other organs die.

### **Strive for solutions that benefit all**

We are all part of one family. A member in pain causes everyone to suffer while a joyful member increases everyone's happiness. Remember that your laughter has the ripple effect of spreading joy to others.

### **Global citizenship isn't a choice**

No single species, civilization or entity can survive alone. Our responsibilities need to extend beyond our physical and mental borders. They must include the whole earth and all its inhabitants. Let us move forward in unison, each offering something towards our collective progress.

### **Interface with nature—hear, feel, see, smell and taste**

We separate ourselves from nature and live in artificial environments. When we're isolated from nature, we don't appreciate or care for it. This leads to exploitation and abuse—our generation is witness. We don't need to claim ownership over nature to enjoy its beauty. It exists for all of us to share and the moments we experience in nature become ours forever. If we spent more time in nature, imbibing its life force, we would learn to respect, and in turn, protect it.

### **The laws of nature apply to all equally**

We all share the same basic needs. Even saints, sages and prophets who have lived on this Earth are subject to its conditions. We are all of the Earth and contact with the Earth is life-giving and life-affirming. Let the Earth heal and nourish you.

### **Don't compromise your uniqueness**

Each one of us is unique in our body, mind and spirit. As humans we define, classify, categorize, and in the process, destroy our uniqueness. You can maintain your individuality despite being part of a group.

### **Always right is always wrong**

No one individual or group is always right. When an individual or group starts thinking that they are, then everyone else becomes wrong. This leads to conflict, small or big.

### **Humans are not separate from nature**

We are a reflection of the universe. How long can we stay isolated from it? We are not above or below nature. Only when immersed in nature will we be able to reach our full potential.

## **ON HEALTHY LIVING**

### **We are afraid to be honest**

If you want to be understood and understand then honesty is essential. Often we say one thing and mean something else. We preach what we do not practice—this causes us to be in conflict with ourselves and others. You have to risk being truthful especially with those you love, and

expect the same in return. Honesty is the best gift we give to each other. Consider silence when the truth would be harmful.

### **Your home is your sanctuary**

After a day of hard work a welcoming home takes away all the stresses and fatigue. A home like that does not just happen. You have to build it with whom and what you love. Your home should be such that you enjoy living in it.

### **Don't burden yourself**

Feeling responsible for what are not your responsibilities is an unnecessary burden. Let go — everything is not for you to manage. On the other hand, if you don't address what you are responsible for that will lead to unhappiness and despair. Think rationally and know your responsibilities.

### **Loneliness destroys the human spirit**

We desire acceptance from our loved ones. We hope to grow and experience the journey of life together. We want to share with them and receive their encouragement and honest feedback.

### **Be yourself and be happy**

Live with spontaneity and originality. Dance to your own music and sing your own songs.

### **Your body is your trustworthy companion**

Our body is our companion from birth to death. We can do nothing without our body. Therefore, we need to have a loving relationship with it. Our body is forgiving if we treat it respectfully and handle it with care. It heals itself even after great excesses and illnesses. Learn about your body and take care of it.

### **True knowledge clears our doubts and speaks to our soul**

Original ideas and teachings get complicated with multiple interpretations, additions and commentaries. They become difficult to understand and practice. They are no longer awe-inspiring. We need to search for the original truths of prophets and sages and embrace them. We need the right teachers to guide us.

### **Be selfish about your own happiness**

Everyone is responsible for their own happiness. You cannot always sacrifice your happiness for the sake of others. Live your life in a way that makes you happy without hurting others.

### **There is no need to suffer**

When you're somewhere you don't want to be than you're unhappy. If you continue to stay there it will cause more stress and more anxiety. Change and be at peace again.

### **Let go and fly**

Clinging to the past, holding on and accumulating weighs you down. We feel bad because we accumulate hurts, adverse experiences and defense mechanisms. Analyze the past and learn from it. It should be one of many factors in decision-making, but not the most important one. Pick and choose from the past what you take into your present and future.

### **You choose to be with your partner**

You try to change your partner to fit your image of who they should be rather than accept them for who they are. This causes endless conflict. Instead, you have to decide whether you can adjust to your partner and stay together or not. If you keep looking for faults, you will keep finding faults.

### **Eat for your body, not for your mind**

When you observe what happens to your body and mind after you eat, you become aware of how foods affect you. Study cultural traditions and modern nutritional studies for dietary advice and regulations that you can adopt. Eat foods that nourish and cleanse your body and mind. Malnourishment and obesity adversely affect every organ system. The extra you eat to satisfy the mind once the body has had adequate nourishment causes illness.

### **Exercise counters sitting**

Our bodies are designed to move and recline when tired. Sitting in chairs for long hours is unnatural. Exercise must include joint flexibility, resistance training, stretching and endurance building. Yoga and Pilates are good forms of exercise, and brisk walking is beneficial too. Your body is unique, so you have to develop your own routine. The more energy you expend the more energy you will gain. Every organ system benefits from proper exercise.

### **Approach decisions systematically**

Don't take things at face value, check for their real worth. Take your time and use your intelligence. Explore every angle. Design an algorithm that helps you evaluate and choose.

### **There is nothing but love**

Love speaks through your eyes, gestures, actions and words. Never miss an opportunity to express it. Love is a universal language that has no barriers—it is understood by all and bonds all. Practice feeling love for everything, animate and inanimate, and see the effect it has. With caring kindness\* all can be healed.

### **Random thoughts are just that**

We forget that our dreams and random thoughts come from the random activity of the brain. We start to falsely identify with them and feel guilty. We only have control over our intentional thoughts and actions.

### **Reflect first, then respond**

You must speak and act with reflection. Take your time and respond when you're comfortable because once you've responded the outcome will be out of your control.

### **The clock runs clockwise**

We will all age and die. Gracefully accept the change, adjust and enjoy. It is a blessing to reach old age with dignity and pride. Respect and care for the elderly, and you will be respected and taken care of when old. Loneliness in old age is a death sentence.

### **Choose to live simply**

It isn't a failure to drop out of a foolish race and carve your own path. Why not live a simple and unhurried life full of wisdom and beauty? The choice is yours. Circumstances and health can change when you least expect it — live well while you can.

### **Look beyond your biases**

We have preconceived notions, opinions and judgments. We view the world through tainted lenses and don't appreciate, acknowledge or love as we ought to. We need to take off our defective glasses, and see with an open mind.

### **Find joy on the path of moderation**

Excess in any form is for the satisfaction of an out-of-control mind. It leads to temporary pleasure followed by a nagging dissatisfaction and desire for more. A lifestyle of excess cannot be maintained for long. Contentment and discipline are needed to achieve harmony.

## **ON CHOICES**

### **The masks we wear hide us from ourselves**

Since childhood we want to be like our role models, good or bad. In the process of doing that, we lose our personalities and forget who we are. We look, dress, live and behave like people who impress us. Instead, we have to be our own selves and enjoy who we are—fulfill our own dreams, make our own choices and embrace our successes and failures.

### **Opportunity presents itself when you're ready.**

If you hesitate when the door opens, you risk being left out. Prepare and be patient, opportunity will come. Don't miss it. Beware of doubt and fear. The level of the opportunity will be in proportion to the degree of your preparation.

### **Yes and no have consequences**

Learn when to say no and when to say yes. It will cause you more trouble if you take on responsibilities because you are unable to say no. In infancy we learn to say "no" from grown-ups who always yell "no" at us. As children and young adults, we learn to say "yes" since "no" is unacceptable to grown-ups. Then we have to spend the rest of our lives re-learning how to say "no."

### **Freedom is the most important human right**

We have the freedom to choose what we allow to enter our minds and affect us. In spirit, we can always be free despite our circumstances. Some of us give up our freedom easily, others are forced to give it up, and many willingly fight and die for freedom.

### **You are the canvas and the artist**

You create your own future with your effort and choices. If you put more effort in and make more right choices, your life will be better. Work hard, smartly not blindly.

### **Choose when to compromise**

Identify factors that adversely affect you and address them. It helps to separate yourself from your problems and deal with them like an outsider. There should only be a few areas where you compromise, the rest you should eliminate. It is impossible to realize your true potential if you're living a compromised life.

### **Whatever will be, will be**

Only speak when you have something meaningful to say, and when you speak, be honest and direct. Remember, outcomes are not in your control; words once spoken cannot be taken back. Carelessly spoken words can do untold damage. Choose your words carefully because they reflect who you are.

### **Choices are empowering so make empowering choices.**

Life is all about choices. You make the choice and the choice will make you. Prepare yourself and be proactive, so that when the time comes you make the right choice. Choosing not to choose is also your choice. Either you choose to fulfill your dreams or else someone will choose for you and fulfill their dreams.

### **ON SELF-RESPECT**

#### **Think for yourself**

We either follow or lead. Instead we should search and learn on our own and allow others to do the same. The goal of formal or informal education should be to learn to think critically. Seek out the company of free-minded people and share with one another.

#### **Every day is a holy day**

We are spiritual beings and all the acts of daily living are sacred rituals. Perform every act with grace and dignity, as if each were a prayer. Mindfulness leads to a whole and holy life.

#### **Intelligence is our most valuable possession**

What makes us different from other animals is our level of intelligence and what makes us different from other people is how we use it. Use your intelligence and awareness to make thoughtful choices so that you can live with the outcomes. Live life with full awareness. Avoid any situation, behavior, ideology or substance that compromises your ability to act consciously.

#### **Go ahead, indulge yourself**

Treat yourself and your loved ones like honored guests in your own home. Enjoy what you earn so that you have no regrets. Rather than neglecting yourself or over-indulging, take a balanced approach. If you learn to treat yourself well, you'll be able to honor and respect others too.

## **Respect yourself first**

Self-respect needs nurturing and takes time to develop. Loss of self-respect is the biggest loss because you feel worthless without it. You don't feel defeated even if you fail when you are able to maintain your self-respect. Never let anyone crush your dignity, and never trample on anyone else's dignity.

## **ON SELF-DISCOVERY**

### **You can't buy time**

We suddenly realize how much time has passed, and the present hits us smack in the face. If there's something that you need to say or do, now is the time. Living in the present requires that you sacrifice the past and the future. A moment missed is a moment lost, so do not miss it or you'll feel sorry for the rest of your life. Be aware of the fleeting nature of time.

### **Self-knowledge is the greatest knowledge**

Everyone wants to know about others. Very few people want to learn about themselves. Explore your inner self—some things will be pleasant and others unpleasant, even unbearable. Become aware of your complete self in order to heal yourself and live a joyful life.

### **Learn to listen**

The soft voice that speaks from within is always right. At times it becomes loud and clear to warn you—listen to it. When you are on the wrong path you shut out your warning systems with drugs and delusions. You can fool the whole world but you cannot fool yourself.

### **Everything happens for a purpose**

We worry about what might never happen and regret what cannot be changed. We fret about imaginary situations. Instead, we need to focus on what is and what can be done about it. Empty your mind of worry and regrets by trusting in God.

### **We are God's mirrors**

The Divine encompasses the whole of creation and can also reside in the heart of a devotee. Each one of us is a locus of the divine; the difference is in the degree of expression. God created us in His image so that we can manifest His attributes.

### **Think before you act.**

What drives you? What are your motives? What is your agenda? What is your hidden agenda? Act with awareness because you alone are responsible for your actions. Undoubtedly, your actions will have a ripple effect. Face the outcomes without justification.

### **Self-discovery leads to self-mastery**

The journey of self-discovery starts when uneasiness with the status quo sets in. It is a long journey worth undertaking that requires reading, listening, reflecting, meditating, and experimenting. On the path of self-discovery you learn to understand and accept yourself. Then, you will be able to control your actions and live life on your own terms.

## **ON SELF-ACTUALIZATION**

### **Study the past, live in the present and plan for the future**

The future is an unknown mystery. No matter how much you plan, you will be surprised at what it brings. Education should teach you to adapt and be ready for the future.

### **Don't worry about the results**

Despite how much effort we put in, we cannot control the results. Trying to control the results leads to disappointments. Not worrying about the results frees us to perform to the best of our abilities—it is liberating.

### **Magic happens**

When moving towards your goals keep your eyes and ears open. If your intention is strong, doors will open. Nature will swing into action to fulfill your good intentions. Your subconscious will monitor the environment and signal when the time is ripe for action. Seize it.

### **Be yourself**

To pretend to be who you are not is exhausting. To be who you are is liberating. Be with those who accept you as you are. Accept them as they are.

### **First, mind your business**

We set about straightening the world when our own house is in disorder. Change and improve yourself first. Then only expect others to change and improve. Setting the right example is the best instruction.

### **Do not stop dreaming**

We all have dreams, but most of us don't realize them and life ends. We have to pause, think, start dreaming and work to make those dreams come true. Let your aspirations sink into your subconsciousness and make firm intentions. Your focused intention has immense power—take the first step. The only limitation is your fearful mind.

### **Go with your natural abilities**

Our natural gifts are our talents and abilities. We need to realize and express them. We need to acquire an occupation that will give us the opportunity to express them. Once we do this, happiness and success will be ours.

### **Setbacks are stepping stones to success**

Everyone has difficulties. Numbing your mind, hiding, escaping and avoiding are not ways to live. Face whatever you have to face. You will emerge a stronger person after every setback. If wronged, remember time dispenses justice.

### **Look at all options**

We accept what we like and what agrees with our preconceived notions. We become blind to what we dislike and disagree with. We often approach problems with biased attitudes, but solutions always need an unbiased approach.

### **Keep space for more**

The more receptive you are the more there is to receive. The more open-minded you are, the more opportunities you will have. Expand your visions and aspirations. If you know it all than what is left to learn?

### **We still have a lot to learn**

Unexplained phenomenon, miraculous healing, inspirations and intuitions have their place. Be prepared to be awed and to accept. There is no phenomenon that we should not investigate. The more we know the more there is to know. To understand, be vigilant and well versed about cause and effect

### **Life is an exquisite dance.**

You have a singular role to play that no one else can fulfill. Find your place and participate in

this extravaganza. You have your own story and your own truth. We are all heroes of our own myths.

### **The eyes see what the mind expects**

If you look for perfect moments—moments of peace and happiness—you will find them. You will either witness them or create them. It is all in your attitude.

### **You are not your mind**

Your mind, a tool, can become your master and enslave you through your ego. Your ego is just a creation of your mind—once you realize this you can control the egocentric mind. A healthy ego is necessary for survival. A healthy ego fits the individual; it is neither small nor big.

### **Our spirit has no limits**

We underestimate ourselves and set imaginary limits on what is possible. Naysayers reside both inside and outside us—we need to overcome them. Go to the edge and then go a little beyond it. Expect some discomfort and pain, but not irreversible damage. Learn from those who have surpassed the limits.

### **Have the same zest from beginning to end.**

We start strong but give up before reaching our goals. The ending always needs more effort. The one who finishes a project gets all the credit. Some projects may not be completed in our lifetime but we have to work on them as if we are going to live forever.