

Meditation by A.C.Sekhar

Meditation is both a science and an art. It is a science exposing the methodology for self-improvement and self-realisation. It is the art of exposing the beauties of life and Creation. It is not concentration or relaxation but a spiritual exercise to attain a desired goal. Meditation is something to be practiced and experienced and not a knowledge to be obtained by normal audio-visual learning processes.

It will experience a joy and bliss much more than any worldly activities of pleasure. As in different forms of creative expressions like music, dance, painting etc, or as in scientific techniques of chemistry, physics and mathematics, so also in meditation there are tools, symbols and aids that require to be used carefully and methodically at different stages and levels of meditation. During meditation certain vibrations are generated in one's body which, if in resonance with the vibrations in Nature and the surroundings, will increase the level of energy in one's Self and will set up thought waves in the right direction to attain the desired goals.

Different religious groups like Hindus, Budhists, Sikhs, Christians and Muslims, seem to have all developed differing techniques of meditation to suit individual perceptions and circumstances but on a closer examination there are many common features for any to reach the required goal through the chosen spiritual exercise. Every technique of every religious group prescribes some postures of meditation, a suitable place and environment, some regularity and rituals at specific times, which can all be linked with the five basic elements of Creation, namely, Matter, Energy, Time, Space and Cosmic power (Maya).

These aspects as generally followed or recommended in Hindu systems are briefly discussed below, but it is advised that each individual should practice and develop his own techniques as suited best for his own circumstances.

1. Environment:

There are several types of waves passing through any Space and such waves around the place of meditation have tremendous influence on the body and mind of the individual in meditation. The place should be calm and serene, free from physical disturbances, obnoxious odors, loud noises, extremes of temperature and humidity. All material objects in the surrounding space should preferably be religious or spiritual oriented. Some Rishis and Sages of old days used to select forest areas surrounded by beauties of nature. Modern homes have Puja rooms, or special areas of spiritual activities with idols, flowers, photos, sweet smell of incense, melodious sounds of prayer hymns etc.

2. Posture:

Posture has a profound influence on meditation. It will help the flow of blood to match with the thought-wave impulses. Some ancient Rishis did meditation in standing postures even on one leg. The best and most comfortable recommended posture is Padmasana the lotus-style sitting posture, with erect spine, high neck, straight head, slightly closed eyes, mouth closed, and with empty stomach with palms in upright position near the abdomen. All these should be suitably adopted to the exact physical condition of the body.

3. Regularity:

Meditation is to be done every day at the same place and time for the same lengths of periods, preferably before sunrise, or immediately after sun-set, or when the sun is crossing the meridian of the place. Other suitable times also can be chosen depending on the convenience of the individual so long as some regularity is maintained. This is to match the diurnal changes in the body to match the forces of energy developed in meditation.

4. Rituals:

Setting the place in Puja styles, uttering hymns in praise of God or extolling beauties of Nature as in Vedas, directing the thoughts to reach the cherished goal, Pranayama or regulate breathing for control of inhaled oxygen and exhaled carbon dioxide, some personal acts like bath & dress before and after meditation are considered as useful and necessary ritualistic parts of complete meditation to invoke the Cosmic Power.

Other religious and non-religious groups also have prescribed similar aids and tools for full benefits from a complete meditation. If this is made one of the daily routines of man he will not only enjoy a bliss which no other material activity can confer on him but would also achieve his goal when other material aids may fail.