

Tibetan Meditation Instructions

by H.H. the Dalai Lama

FIRST, LOOK TO your posture: arrange the legs in the most comfortable position; set the backbone as straight as an arrow. Place your hands in the position of meditative equipoise, four finger widths below the navel, with the left hand on the bottom, right hand on top, and your thumbs touching to form a triangle. This placement of the



hands has connection with the place inside the body where inner heat is generated.

Bending the chin down slightly, allow the mouth and teeth to be as usual and relaxed, with the tip of the tongue touching the roof of the mouth near the top front teeth.

Let the eyes gaze downward loosely. It is not necessary that the eyes be directed to the tip of the nose. They can be pointed towards the floor in front of you if this seems more natural. The eyes should be a relaxed gaze. Leave them open a little, not in a stare or forcefully shut. It is IMPORTANT to be relaxed. Sometimes the eyes will close or open on their own accord. This is alright. Even when your eyes are open, when your mental consciousness becomes steady on an object (e.g., a small pebble), these appearances to the eyes will not disturb you.

LEAVE YOUR MIND vividly in a natural state, without thinking of what happened in the past or what you are planning for the future and without generating any conceptuality.

Ask yourself, “where does it seem that your consciousness is? Is it with the eyes or where is it? Most likely you have a sense that it is associated with the eyes since we derive most of our awareness of the world through vision. This is due to having relied too much on your sense consciousness. However, the existence of a separate mental consciousness can be ascertained; for example, when attention is diverted by sound, that which appears to the eye consciousness is not noticed. This indicates that a separate mental consciousness is paying more attention to sound heard by the ear consciousness than to the perceptions of the eye consciousness.

With persistent practice, consciousness may eventually be perceived or felt as an entity of mere luminosity and knowing, to which anything is capable of appearing and which, when appropriate conditions arise, can be generated in the image of whatever object. As long as the mind does not encounter the external circumstances of conceptuality, it

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will abide empty without anything appearing in it, like clear water. Its very entity is that of mere experience.

Let the mind flow of its own accord without conceptual overlay. In the beginning, when you are not used to this practice, it is quite difficult; but, in time, the mind appears like clear water. Then, stay with this “unfabricated” mind without allowing conceptions to be generated. In realizing this nature of the mind, we have for the first time located the object of observation of this internal type of meditation.

The best time for practicing this form of meditation is in the morning, in a quiet place when the mind is very clear and alert. It helps not to have eaten too much the night before or to sleep too much. This makes the mind lighter and sharper the next morning. Gradually, the mind will become more and more stable. Mindfulness and memory will become clearer.