

Imagination and Attention Needed for Good Meditation

Three-Day Meditation Workshop — Day One, Part 1

Deerfield, Illinois — September 20, 2013

Friends, welcome to this three-day meditation workshop. We are here to meditate for three days to see what meditation does to us and to our lives. Before we can start, we should know what is meditation. What is it to meditate? If I ask this question from ten people, I normally get about ten answers. There are different kinds of yogas they practice. They say we meditate upon this, on that method. We have different ways of meditation, so when we just say meditation workshop, it's not clear what kind of meditation we are going to do here.

I looked up the dictionary to see what meditation means. What does it mean to meditate? It is very simple: to meditate means to think about something. Whatever you think about, you are meditating on that. That made it very simple. That made the whole definition of meditation simple, that what you think about is what you meditate on.

We think about so many things, so we are all meditating all the time. Nobody stops thinking; therefore, nobody stops meditating. Then what's the big deal? We are all meditating already. We meditate on our homes. We meditate on our houses, our cars, our friends, our spouses, our children, our parents. We meditate all the time. So, if meditation is merely thinking about something, we are doing it already.

Then why have a special workshop to do a meditation workshop? It is one area where we don't think about, and to meditate or think about that area is what really constitutes a suitable subject for meditation in a meditation workshop. The one area which we do not meditate upon is our own self. We meditate upon everything else. We meditate upon people, other people. We meditate upon things, objects. We do not meditate on what the self is. Who are we? Where are we? What is our reality? Is this body our reality? Is the physical body that we have to meditate on? Is there something more than that?

The physical body has a very limited life. Where were we before we were born? If we are immortal souls, where is the soul? What is a soul? Where can we find it? Can't we know our own soul if we are that soul ourselves? If the soul is functioning in the body, why can't we have any contact with it? How can we lose contact with our own self? If our immortal soul is our real self, how come we have lost contact with our own self? To meditate upon the soul, to meditate upon the self, to meditate upon that which gave us the experience of having a physical body, to meditate upon that which gave us all experiences through the sense perceptions of the physical body, that would be a good subject for meditation in a meditation workshop.

We are here to explore the self. We are here to see how we can think about and reach an actual experience of who we really are, which is our soul. If we can find out who we are, if we can find out what the self really consists of, we'll have found answers to all our questions, because all of our questions are arising from our ignorance of knowing who we are. We would not be a questioner if we knew who we were. We are asking all questions about everything because everything is away from us. Whenever something is far away, we have questions. We don't know what it is. Whether we can see it or not see it, whether we can touch it or not touch it, whether we have perception of it or not, if it is not directly with us, we have questions.

Now think of your life. What have all your questions been? Every question you ever asked was about something outside, away from you. You never asked a question, "Who is the questioner? Who is questioning everything?" Why can't we go deep into where these questions are coming from? We have strange experiences of not only questions. We have experiences of doubt. What is doubt? Why do we disbelieve something? Why can't we trust something? We are seeing something, and we have a doubt. We hear something, and we have a doubt. We hear a clear message and we have a doubt. Where is this doubt coming from? Is there a solution to this? Is it not coming from the fact that we are not close enough to ourselves and find out where the doubt comes from? When we have a problem, we go to the root of the problem, take care of it and solve it. We have a problem today. We have a problem of doubt, a problem of distrust, a problem of not being able to trust anything and anybody. Where is it coming from? Can't we go to the root of our distrust and take care of it and be trusting ever after that?

We are sick. Why don't we find a reason of our sickness? We are afraid. Where is this fear coming from? Why can't we go to the root of fear and find out if we really need to fear...or are we afraid because we don't know where it is coming from? The very ignorance of the root of all these experiences could be the cause of all these experiences because of our distance from the center of these experiences. And there is no doubt that the consciousness of a self exists.

I have never met a person who says, "I doubt if I exist." I have met people who say, "I doubt that my body exists. I doubt if my dream was real or unreal," but I never have come across a person who says, "I don't exist." Then who are you telling me this? There is one sense of certainty we have, only one certainty which is beyond doubt, and we all have that certainty—that we exist. Where is this coming from? Where is this certainty coming that you exist? Supposing a thousand people came and told you you don't exist. You will not believe them. You believe the experience of knowing you exist. What gives you that experience that you exist? Obviously, it's the existence of your own self that is certain. Nothing else is certain. Everything else has to be explored for certainty, for trust, for removing doubt, but there is no doubt that we exist, that we are a self, that the self is

experiencing everything, including doubts and fears.

Why don't we explore the self? Why don't we go and find where the self is? It's not very difficult to locate the self. When we are in the physical body, and we look around, we don't see our self hanging around somewhere else. It's within this body. Nobody has ever experienced his own self somewhere else. The self is always experienced inside the body, that we are thinking, questioning, meditating within this body. Therefore, at least that confines the area of investigation to a physical body, that if we have to find the self, it has to be found in a limited space just a few feet tall and a little wide, and we call it a human body, and the self has to be found there and does not exist anywhere else, and the only thing on which we have no doubt, that the self exists.

So, let's start with what we are sure of. Why start on a premise where we already have doubts whether it exists or not. Let's start from where we are absolutely sure that the self exists, and let's go and explore the self. Now if you want to know where the self is in the physical body, that's not difficult either, because the self is doing various things which are so obvious. For example, the self is questioning. There's no doubt about that also. The self speaks and asks what it is. There's no doubt about that also. The self thinks. There's no doubt about that also. The self meditates upon things. No doubt about that. Where are all these three things happening? In the head of a person. Not in the throat, not in the various chakras of the body, not in the limbs, not anywhere else. When we think, where do we think from? We look at people and think about them. It's not difficult to know where we are thinking from. We think from within the head. We know when we think that the thought is coming from somewhere. The nose is below us, the mouth is below us. We can feel it. With eyes closed, we can feel it. With our eyes closed and completely in a meditative state, we can know that the thinking process, the process of expressing the self in one way or the other, is all taking place in a very limited space within the physical head of the body. Wow, that makes it very easy! Our area of exploration is cut down to a very small few inches of space within the physical head.

The very thing that we are absolutely certain of exists within this small space we call the physical head. Let's go a little further. Where do we do this in the physical head? Is it all over? Is it in the eyes? In the ears? Can we put our thinking mechanism, a mechanism of expressing ourselves, asking questions inside our head, can you put it anywhere in the head? Or can we further narrow down the area from where it's coming? It does not take too long in contemplation to know, with your eyes closed and contemplating upon, "Where am I thinking from, where am I talking from, where am I conveying my messages to my body to move and do things, where is it happening"? It's not too far inside of the head. It's right in the middle of the head. Doesn't take too long. Anybody can contemplate and find out that the whole process of conscious operation of the self is taking place in the middle of this physical head behind the eyes in the center, as if the two eyes that look outside, if you drew

lines right into the head and place a bar between our ears and have now two lines going back and a bar placed between the ears, we are sitting on the top of that bar behind the eyes in the center, and that's where the self is operating from. Doesn't take too long to know that.

If we know the location of our self, that should make it easy for us to find who we are. People have been saying, "Know your self." What does it mean? It means find out who is sitting on that bar inside between the ears and behind the eyes. The eyes seem to be converging there. It's very strange that these eyes that are looking straight out have to absorb multiple images, combine them to see one image in a three-dimensional, four-dimensional way. Where is that? Where are the physical eyes seeing that one image from? Well, they say they design cameras, they designed means of viewing two pictures, slightly different, looking at two different eyes and finding they are different. The eyeball cannot see. One eyeball cannot see exactly what the other eyeball is seeing, a little difference. You take a camera with two eyes to take picture, two are different. If you see them together, they become one, and if you create distance and they create all the feeling it's a three-dimensional picture. We go and see three-dimensional movies now. They used to give us red and green glasses, so one film was filmed in red, one was filmed in green. When we used to see with those two colored glasses, they merged and we saw three dimensions. Now they have improved even further. They use Polaroid glasses. Polaroid vision can be twisted one in one direction, one in another direction, and that's why it is called polarized. We change the poles. You change the poles like this when you see with those glasses, everything becomes three dimensional. You are seeing two pictures as one.

The two eyes are still seeing two pictures. Where are they becoming one? In our head in the optical system. Where is the combination taking place? It's not taking place in the optic nerve at all. The optic nerves are going from the eyes into the head. Are we seeing in that part of the optic brain? No, we are seeing in front of the eyes. Where do we see them? Examine this, think about it. Where do we see this world in three dimensions when we open these physical eyes? We see exactly at the point where we are sitting. The self is sitting on the bar between the ears and behind these two eyes. Those are the eyes that actually see. They use these eyes just as an instrument for seeing. Seeing is taking place inside. Seeing of the world is taking place inside and is taking place right in the middle. Very appropriately, that is the eye that sees, not these. These just convey what they are seeing to make it one vision. On that bench, on that little line that is drawn between the ears and behind the eyes, right as if it is a third eye! As if the third eye sees what the two eyes present to it. Very appropriately, it has been called the third eye. All mystics have spoken of the third eye. They sometimes speak of single eye. Great mystic says, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be filled with light." What does that mean? If you have a single eye, it doesn't mean you break off the physical eye to make a single. Blind people,

they don't see any light with one eye off. What it means is that if you can be aware of the single eye that lies behind these two eyes, the whole body will be filled with light. If you can be where the single eye is, the whole body will be filled with light, more light than exists outside in this world.

It's an experience. It's not some kind of a theoretical model that we are presenting. Where does the light come from? What is light? There can be so many questions about it. How can light be generated? Where is the source of light? Thousands of questions can come up, but the truth is, if your eye is single, that means you have withdrawn the power of seeing from these two eyes to the third eye behind, with which you have been seeing all your life. It's not something new. You have been seeing with that eye all the time using these two eyes and seeing a single world, single vision, with that eye all the time in the head. It's not even related to any organ of the body. It's not even related to the pituitary body. It's close to it. The pineal gland and the pituitary body in the brain are pretty close to it, but they are not functioning. That's not the end of the optic nerve. Therefore, when we see from the third eye, and we become aware of the third eye, we have our whole body filled with light. We see light.

I asked a friend of mine in India who was on a spiritual path and was trying various kinds of meditations. I said, "Why don't you try and just be *there* and cover your head so that no outside light comes." He took a thick blanket and put it over his head, and then so much light filled up, he had to throw it away. "Where is it coming from?" He thought it must be coming from outside. With all the thick blanket, he saw more light than he had seen outside. That light is there in all of us. It's not a unique phenomenon. It is not a phenomenon that happened because some people are gifted with light. It happened because he could be aware of the third eye. He could be aware of the eye that lies behind these eyes.

How do we be aware of that? Let's go back. Now we are on the real subject of meditation! What is awareness? How can we be aware of something? I want to be aware of this cup of water. How do I become aware? It was lying on my side. In the corner of my eye, physical eye, I could see it was there. I was not aware of it. I was aware of you and my talk. How did I become aware of it? I picked it up, and I put my attention on it...took a sip of it. My attention is on the water in the cup. I become aware of the water and the cup. What led to my awareness of the water in the cup? My attention! Can you imagine this simple thing which is called attention was responsible for bringing me awareness of the water? Don't you think the same thing can bring me awareness of my third eye? If I can use attention to be aware of anything, I can go to a music concert and listen to the drums I like most. I can concentrate my attention on the drums. It looks like all of the musical instruments are silenced, I can hear the drums so clearly. They have not changed their volume at all! My attention has the capacity not only to pick up awareness of something but to concentrate it

to such an extent as to divest awareness of other things.

The most wonderful gift we ever got from our Creator. Whoever created this body and this mind and this awareness placed the best gift we could ever have—the power of attention and the power of concentrating our attention wherever we like and make that thing aware where we put our attention. We become aware of this whole world by using this power. We have knowledge of this world because we have the power of attention, which we use and become aware of everything that we want to be aware of. We withdraw our attention, they disappear; we put our attention, they come back. Attention is so powerful that it can generate the entire experience of an entire universe, of the whole world. We are having the experience only because we have awareness which can be focused on anything we like. We have the power of attention.

So here, let's go back. If awareness and attention are the main thing, then let's go back and say how can we use this awareness and attention to find out where the self is sitting behind the eyes at the third eye center. Simple! Close your eyes so that you don't waste it by scattered attention outside. Pull yourself in the darkness that comes in front of you to prevent more distraction from outside and put your attention in the center of the head. Not difficult, yet I think it's the most effective meditation one can find. I have joined you people here to do that meditation. This meditation workshop is to teach us how to withdraw our attention to the center of our head, behind the eyes in the center between the two eyes and between the ears, and at that point to discover the self, which we will discover if the power of awareness and attention is so strong and it lets us know who is there. We will find out who we are, and we'll find out personally, directly, not on anybody else's testimony. We don't need a psychoanalyst or a psychologist to tell us who we are. We find out ourselves behind the eyes. Therefore, it should be very simple. We should all within the next few minutes when we start our meditation put our attention back in the center of the head, withdraw there, and find out who we are, or we can end our meditation workshop in a few minutes and say goodbye.

There is a little problem, I'm sorry. The problem is we have used this power of attention to focus on things. We have never used this attention to withdraw. We have used attention to come from the seat of awareness behind the eyes and taken it out to our sense perceptions and put them on other things outside of ourselves. Right from birth till now. That's what we have been practicing, how to use your attention on outside things. Therefore, we have learned very well automatically how we can focus attention, concentrate our attention, on things outside. We have never learned how to withdraw attention. Should it be very difficult?

Yes, it's the exact opposite. It's the opposite of what we have been doing. We have been trying to focus attention, put our attention out on things all our life, and now suddenly we

want to pull the attention back. We are not going to put our attention on some spot of our own imagination inside. We want to pull the attention back from where the attention is flowing out. We want to put the attention back on our self. The self, the conscious self, the self that has awareness, is alive and can see things and can think about things, can be conscious about things, that self is projecting the attention out. We have to pull the attention back to that self. We don't have to see our self somewhere inside, because if we say, "We pulled our attention in and closed our eyes and saw an image of our selves and began to look at it, now we are looking at the self," we are looking at an image.

Where is the self? The self is the one looking at that image inside. We have to pull our attention back to the self. We have never done it. The difficulty is not because we don't know what is to be done. The difficulty is we have never done it before. We have always done the opposite of it. We have always done the focusing of attention outside. Here we are now required to do the withdrawal of attention, not focus it anywhere, withdrawal of attention to its source from where it's arising, from where it's coming out. That makes it a little more tricky, so meditation becomes a little more tricky because of this change. If it was merely focusing attention on something in your imagination, it would be easy. You could imagine yourself in the darkness in front and say, "I am inside my head now. I see it's all dark. Where I'm sitting on a chair in the middle, I can see it," and be done with it. It doesn't work! You are not looking at the self, you are looking at an image you made within the head.

And also, I will tell you something very strange. When you think you have made an image of yourself within the head, it is still outside. You think that when you close your eyes the darkness in front of you has become inside. It hasn't! You are so used to looking, seeing with the physical eyes that even when you close your eyes, you are still trying to look with the same physical eyes. Just because you make an artificial darkness by closing your lids doesn't take you inside. So, when you say, "I'm seeing little bit of me and that's inside me and I am meditating on that," you are looking at a little being of yours, a little image of yours that you have made outside these eyes right in front and thinking it's inside.

I sometimes give a very simple experiment to try to find out where that image is. I say if you want to know where your eyes are, you can touch them with your hands. Very easy. Even if the eyes are closed. If you say I want to touch my eyes, my eyes are closed, you still touch them with your hands. You know where they are, where the eyes are. Now when you pull your hands to your eyes, you know where the eyes are, so you know when it touches the eyes anything that you have just crossed over was outside the eyes. Now do meditation with a little image of yours and say, "I'm looking at myself sitting there in the darkness inside the head," and then at that time bring the hands forward. You will find that image you were seeing has already been crossed before you touch the eyes. The image was outside. The darkness outside was not inside. We make these mistakes thinking that just

closing the eyes pulls us inside.

No, the attention has to go to where we are looking out from, where we are. Whether we are a thinking machine, whether we are a conscious creator of experience, whether we are a recipient of experience, wherever we are, withdraw attention to that where you are—and then only it becomes meditation. Otherwise it is just imagination, imagining things. You can imagine outside or inside; it doesn't matter. It's not a withdrawal of attention to the self. How can you find who you are if you are looking at something else? It can never happen. That's why it doesn't matter whether you are keeping your eyes open and looking outside or closing your eyes and looking at images inside. You are not looking at yourself, and you cannot look at yourself. At the physical body, has anybody ever seen their own eyes even physically, except in a mirror, except in a reflection? Here the power of seeing is in these physical...power of seeing is in these physical eyes—you can't see your own eyes. Because you see with the eyes and you have to see something separate from the eyes. You cannot see your own eyes.

Same way, you cannot see your own self. You can know where the self is. When we say, "Withdraw your attention to the point where you are," it does not mean you will be able to see yourself. You will know you are there. You will know who you are. That is much more important than being able to see something, because an awareness of who you are and where you are is far more important for knowledge of the self than anything that you can see or experience. Experience is, after all, only a function of the self, and self is that can create all functions. Therefore, to know yourself you have to be knowing where you are, who you are.

Now this difficult question of learning how to withdraw attention has been made somewhat simple but not completely. That's why meditation is not that easy. It has been made simple because we can add to the power of concentration of attention another function that we have, the power of imagination. We can imagine anything. That's also great. It also arises, this power of imagination is arising from the same conscious self that creates the power of awareness, that creates the power of attention. The power of imagination. What does the power of imagination do? It can create images, like we can create an image inside or outside. It can also make you feel that you are not where you are, then you can be somewhere else. If I wanted you to say that you entered from the door and there's a rock here, and imagine you are standing next to the rock. Now you are not going there personally, physically, but if you imagine you are standing next to the rock, you will make an image that you are standing next to the rock. How did you do that? Not by putting your attention because there was nothing of you to put attention on. You used imagination to place yourself in imagination as an object and then putting your attention on it.

So, you used two things, imagination and attention. In meditation we do the same thing.

We first know the location of the self pretty well, between the ears, behind the eyes in the center. Why not imagine we are there? Not see us there, just imagine we are there, like we imagined we were near the rock? We imagine we are there. If we can imagine we are there and then see what is going on around us, and not try to see ourselves but just imagine we are there, and then say, "What do we look like? What is my appearance here? Do I have a form? Is this form of mine, a consciousness of mine, merely a function? Is it a form? Is it a body? Is it something else?" We'll get a lot of answers, because we'll be directly experiencing what we are asking. We'll be right in the area of that knowledge of our own self. Therefore, it's good to be able to do the practice of meditation in a way step by step, move forward to learning more about our selves before we learn what else we can do if we knew ourselves. If we knew who we are, maybe we can do lots of things, like creating a new universe, like changing this whole universe in one instant. Depending on what happens there, depending on how much power that real self contains, and we can also find out that a lot of selves are one, or two, or ten. There are so many questions that get answered if you can pull yourself to the area where the self exists, of which we have no doubt and are completely certain.

Therefore, the meditation that I want to share with you is a meditation where we pull our attention back to where we are operating from, to our self in the center of the head. And to do that we don't try to focus attention on anything. We stop focusing. We don't run somewhere to catch something, we stop running because we have to find our self. If somebody says, "Where is your body?" and you start running, I say, "What is this? I asked you where your body is and you start running?" But that's what we are doing. I say, "Where is your self?" and we start running out to find it elsewhere. We have to be where we actually are right now. Maybe some other time we may be somewhere else. Maybe then we are not aware of our body. We don't know where the head is. Maybe we are somewhere else. Maybe when we are dreaming. Maybe we are not there.

Some people, some yogis who are able to awaken themselves immediately during a dream sequence are able to find that if they thought where is their head, they touch their throats. Where are their eyes, like I did in the experiment that the images we form are outside, they say, "Where are my eyes?" they touch their throat. They could see, feel these physical eyes shifted down. It does not mean that all the time we are located in the temporary body like this. If we are immortal, the temporary body is a temporary abode for us. It's not forever. Therefore, only in the wakeful state in the physical body can we be sure that we are in the center of the head behind the eyes. Only in the wakeful state in the physical body is that the place where we have to go. But we can do that in a wakeful state better than other states. It's very difficult to do it in a dream state. We lose the sense of will. We have very little willpower and free will in a dream. We seem to have much more now, so this is a good time while we are in a physical body awake that we try to find out where we are behind the eyes. Simplest method to start is to imagine that you are there.

Now the process is different. Don't make an image of yourself. Close your eyes and be there and say, "I am there. That's where I'm thinking from. I can see other things. I can't see myself because I am there, but I can see other things in front of me. I can see on the side. I can turn my head and see without turning the physical head." Looks like that power of vision is all over inside. Without turning this physical head, you may be able to explore the sides of that space around. With practice you can turn around and look at the back. So that's a good starting point. Once we can practice being there, then we'll find that there are some distractions pulling us away from there, which have been pulling us all our life. Therefore, we never practiced on our own. Nobody told us, and the distraction that pulled us kept us away all the time, even for a moment of peace inside. We want to be peaceful at least one place of peace within our self, and we could never have that peace because of distractions. What are the distractions?

Thoughts about things outside. We constantly think about things outside all the time, day and night. They will happen in this exercise also. They happen in meditation also. Every time they distract you and pull you out, you are no longer there. Then you have to bring yourself back even by imagination. To be able to hold your self there requires various other devices, like repetition of words, listening to sounds, concentrating in other ways, listening to images that are of your design, listening to images that have a greater connection with the center than other images, and so on. Then, of course, meditation takes many forms and requires more steps to be taken. But the initial step is to be there. Without that, we are not discovering the self at all.

We can have many other benefits of different kinds of meditation. I know I went to visit a friend's house who was a great meditator and wanted me to come and meditate in that house and that if we meditated together the ambiance, the vibration of the house will go up. So, I went there, and the friend played music called meditational music. It was so beautiful. We listened to the music, very charming music, calming music, peaceful, and we felt good, but never had any knowledge of the self. We never got any information who we are. And after that, somebody insulted us, we were angry the same way as before. We were not changed. Our anger, our lust, our greed, our possessiveness, the nature that has come by constant interaction with these distractions, was the same. For some time it was good, and we felt good. If you are here to learn meditation to feel good, there are lots of meditations you can do on things outside. If you are here as a seeker of the truth, a seeker of the absolute truth, then the meditation must start from a discovery of the only certainty you have, which is the self. The only truth you know today is that you exist and you are the self. Start from there. Otherwise you're not seeking the absolute truth.

What is truth? What do we call absolute truth? If something can come and go, will I call it truth? If something can change, will I call it truth? I look around this whole world. Everything is changing all the time. People are changing. My body is changing. Everybody's

body is changing. Environment is changing. Creations are changing. Countries are changing. Galaxies are changing. The universe is changing...continuously without break. How can it be true? How can it be real or absolute truth? In the midst of all this change that is going on, there is one observable thing that does not change: The one who is observing the change. The observer has not changed at all. The self has not changed.

How can we then say anything else can be absolute true when it changes and the only thing that does not change is our own observer, the observing self. The observing self must be the only truth. And when we explore it further and remove the peripheral distractions away from it, we'll find that truth is really immortal and everlasting. And we can't find it while we are seeing it enclosed with other covers. The covers upon the truth make it an untruth. We can't even see it. There are many covers, three covers I can see very clearly blocking us from the truth.

First cover, our own mind that thinks and creates distractions. Second cover, our sense perceptions that confine our experience to what we perceive and nothing more. Third cover, big cover, the thick body of ours, the physical body that makes only physical reality real and writes off everything else. These three covers are preventing us to see the truth, preventing us to see the self. Therefore, we have to break through these covers.

First is easy by putting your attention behind the eyes through the power of imagination that you are there. What happens when you do that consistently and for a little while—and you will try it during this meditation session—that you become gradually unaware of what is happening outside that space? It is gradual. Because you are so used to putting attention outside, it becomes very gradual. Gradually you don't know where your body is. It does not happen at once. It starts in stages. It starts with the extremities, the feet and the hands. You don't know where they are to start with. Then you don't know where the arms and the legs are. Then you don't know where the torso is, and then you don't know where the body is. It's a progressive thing that moves from the extremities and goes all the way to the head, a process that is so similar to death of the physical body. When a person dies, he dies the same way.

When a person dies, if you have seen a person who is able to talk in a terminal case and continuously talks till he is dead, you see he doesn't know where the hands and feet have gone, doesn't know where the legs are, where the arms are, doesn't know where the bottom has gone and is flying in the sky, and then ultimately—still speaking to us—and only when the attention is pulled up to the head and the brain dies, he's dead. It's the same process that takes place in meditation. Meditation has sometimes been called dying while living, and while you are living, everything is working, you still have the same experience.

So, therefore, it's a great experience, a little bit frightening for newcomers. If you move too fast, it can be frightening because it resembles death. But if you do it slow and steady, one

stage at a time, very enjoyable. Then you come to know how you are pulling your self to your own self, pulling through your attention and knowledge of who you are. When you reach that point of having no awareness because you have withdrawn your awareness by concentration of attention on the imagined location of your self in the center of the head, when that happens, you have removed one cover from your experiences. The physical cover is no longer preventing your experience, and you have an experience of light, of sound, of knowledge, of communication, of telepathic communication, of things which [you] had no idea when this big cover was placed upon us. You have knowledge of your internal sensory body, of your astral body, which is also a body, another cover, but still very different from this one.

It's a practical experience one can have and get back to this body again. It's like making a trip into reality, one level of reality. You can use the same process to go further down and get rid of the sensory perceptions also, which is another body, and find that your thinking machine still operates, thoughts still operate, and you still operate. But you can even withdraw further in the thinking body, which is also a body, and they are all covers, and withdraw and find who you really are. You were consciousness, life per se, which made all these covers functional and alive. You gave life to all these covers, and, therefore, you had experiences of various degrees of various kinds, depending on how many covers you put on.

With all the covers, the only reality for us left is the material world because of the material body. A physical body makes the physical world the only reality. You remove it, the other one becomes the only reality. You move further, the causal body, the mental body, the body of thoughts becomes the only reality. When you remove all this, you find the only reality was your self and whatever is around your self is the only reality and none of these covers. This is called self-realization. Self-realization does not end merely by being there. Self-realization is a process by which you are able to take the awareness away from these covers, while you are alive, with the covers intact. While you are alive, you can do it. The power of doing it does not lie in any physical strength or mental strength or sensory strength. It lies in the power of life itself, of the soul itself, of consciousness itself, that the consciousness can generate an experience of imagination and attention and put these together, and you can do all this that I am talking about.

We all have this. There is no special person who is gifted with these. ("He is a gifted person; he can do it.") No, we all have the equipment. We all are gifted. We are gifted because we are human. Human beings have this special gift, that we can use our attention. What is the special gift that we can use our attention and a dog and a cat and a bird and a ghost cannot do it? How come...how do we have this particular gift that they don't have? They all have gifts of observing the universe. They all have gift of living a life. They are all living, have consciousness, have a soul. What is this unique gift?

The unique gift is that we are ignorant of what is already planned for us, and we think we have to make choices in life to live, that we have an experience of free will, that the experience of free will generates a special kind of experience, gives you power. Supposing you say, "I'm helpless," the power is lost. If you say, "No, I can help it, I can do it," the power is regained. The power of the experience of free will, real or unreal it doesn't matter. So long as you experience, you are making a choice, it's an experience. You chose, you decided. This is very powerful thing, available only in the human body. It's not available to animals, plants, clouds, things, nor available to angels, available to ghosts, spirits, not available to them because they can know what is going to happen and we don't know. Imagine the basis of such an important gift should be ignorance!

I heard somebody say ignorance is bliss. I didn't know it was so much bliss, just because you are ignorant of what's going to happen. If a person sitting next to us can know what we are going to decide because he has knowledge of our future, he's keeping quiet, watching... I'm saying, "I have to decide. I have to go right or left. I am going to go right. Oh, no, I must, I should go right." He has already written that piece of paper: "He will go right." He has seen it. Now I think I am attributing this to my experience of free will. I am saying I chose. And what did that do to my consciousness? Made me empowered to decide. What is this strange experience of being empowered to make choices and decide with we call free will? What does that do to us in terms of discovery of the self?

It makes us into seekers. It makes us into seekers, into experimenters, makes us meditators. Without that, we won't do it. Imagine we don't meditate because it's incumbent upon us. We meditate as a choice. When we make a choice to meditate, we are using this very experience of free will, so it's a wonderful thing to have no... It doesn't matter how real, unreal it is! People say there's no real free will because everything is predetermined. I agree. We don't experience it like that. We are experiencing it as real. We might as well say this whole world is unreal. Let's not live in it. But we experience it as real, so we live in it. You might as well say this body is not real, let me drown. Then when the pain comes, we say, "No, it's real!" Do we always need pain to make things real?

One guy has written a book on this, that pain is necessary to experience reality. Very sad commentary on our concept of reality, that we must have pain to say it's real. Otherwise we can believe for a while that it is not real. The truth is we create reality one at a time, and when we are in the cover of the physical body, the physical world is the only reality. All else is to be explored. Therefore, in this physical reality we are using physical means, including the physical means of an experience in physical body of free will, and the free will makes us meditate. The free will makes us imagine. The free will makes us do all these things. Let's use it! So long as we have got it, whether we got by ignorance or by a specific very kind of intricate plan to make us believe that in order not to believe or something, whatever it is, we have it! So we use our choice to meditate and thereby open up the doors to discover the

choice was not real. Doesn't matter. We use it effectively, so that's why this free will is a very deep subject, something to be really considered. I'll talk to you sometime about that. But right now, we are going to use our free will, whatever we feel we have, in order to imagine our selves behind the eyes.

Now, before we do that, how many of you have attended a workshop with me before? How many of you have come for the first time? Okay, thank you. Because there are several people first time, I am going to do some introductory exercises which I do in order to help us understand the nature of attention a little better and the nature of how we move attention a little better. So a couple of experiments we'll do, and then we'll go on to meditation.

The first experiment is called the Orange Juice Experiment. Those who have done it, how many of you enjoyed it? Oh, well, good opinion. How many didn't like it at all? No negative vote. A little bit, he says, somewhat. Anyway, this is an interesting experiment, and it's an experiment about our body and about our attention. We will now imagine that our body is made of glass. It's a glass vessel in the shape of a body, hollow from inside, and we are going to fill it up with imagination with orange juice, right from the feet, toes of the feet, all the way up, every part of the body, right to the tips of the fingers, through the arms, right to the top of the head, we will fill it up with orange juice. And once we've filled it up, we have to recheck, double check that no place is empty, that every part of this glass body is filled with orange juice. And then I will give you directions what to do, because in this glass body there are a couple of valves attached. There are valves attached to the tips of the fingers. If you press them, the orange juice flows out. Press them gently, it flows out drop by drop; press them hard, it flows out fast. They are just valves that work like this. There also exist valves in the toes of your feet, and when you press the toes on the floor, the orange juice goes out from there. If you don't, it's held back. It's a nice valve. It prevents the flow of orange juice.

Now I will give you directions when to press these valves. Meanwhile, right now close your eyes. It's easier to do it with closed eyes. Close your eyes. Imagine that your body is made of glass and is empty inside. Then imagine from the feet to the head gradually filling it up with orange juice and see the surface of orange juice going up as you fill it up.

[Pause in the video here. Part of the Orange Juice Experiment not was recorded.]

From the world of orange juice, back to this workshop. How many of you could successfully do this experiment? Very good. How many of you had difficulty? Not much, not many. What was the purpose of doing this? Why did we do this? We did it to demonstrate to our self that the attention can move in the body wherever we like. We move the attention from head to toe at different times. We would hold it where we like. We could take it down, up like we liked. We had the power to look within our own self. What were we using? We were

using only two things: imagination and attention. That's it. The very combination we need for effective good meditation. An experiment revealed to us we have the necessary tools to achieve success in meditation. We could imagine, and we could use our attention to place it wherever we liked. Nothing else is needed for meditation, good meditation. So, you all qualified! By a simple test with artificial, imaginary orange juice. How many of you at the end of the exercise still felt some orange juice was sticking inside the body? It's a good indication that the portion of the body, physical body, where it was sticking still is the one that needs some medical help. It's also a self-diagnostic method that you can know that's where the attention is being caught and you can't get over it. I'm not giving medical advice. I am only saying that it has been found to be a good diagnostic means, one of the means.

Once you know how you imagined, you know what is to be used in our meditation, imagination of that kind. You didn't go anywhere. I said shake your head if you have anything, shake your arms. You didn't shake them. You felt you shook them. This was a great exercise in imagination and attention in using that.

One more exercise. It's an exercise in sense perceptions. In this exercise we'll again close our eyes, and we'll imagine. This is starting of the use of the first exercise. We'll imagine we are sitting in our head. To make it easy, we will first imagine that the body is not a glass jar. This time it's a house, a house in which we live, a house which has got some strange kind of attachments called arms and legs, but the main house is our torso, main body that sits on the chair right now, or on the floor or whatever. It's a torso that is sitting upright. That's our house. And the house has many levels, many floors. It's got a floor right at the bottom. There is a bottom floor, ground floor, the basement. Then at the level of the genitals it has another floor. At the level of the navel it's another floor. The level of the heart another floor. Throat is another floor. And then at the eyes is the top floor, the sixth floor. Now we want to sit only on the sixth floor.

Because we have been traveling in the other floors too often, up and down, up and down all our life, you will notice that our attention has been floating in these areas all the time. If this was a house all the time, we have been moving from floor to floor, going up and down, sometimes by steps in front, sometimes by the elevator in the spine behind, but that's what we have been doing. We never sat for any length of time on the sixth floor. The sixth floor is behind the eyes and covers the entire area of the head above the eyes. Now we have to make sure that because of our old habit of going to lower floors, we don't sink to those floors during this exercise. Therefore, we build a nice floor, steel floor, concrete floor, something hard behind our eyes, so that when we sit on it we don't sink. The tendency to sink will be strong, I can tell you, because of our previous habits. But if we make a strong floor and does not let us go anywhere below the eyes, we'll be successful. On that floor we'll take a comfortable chair, better than the chair you are sitting on because now we can take any chair we like. It's imaginary. Free. So,, we'll take the best chair we can think of, the most

desirable chair on which you would like to sit comfortably and by imagination place it in the center of the sixth floor room, and we'll put it in the center. And then we take a little side table like the one I have here on which the flowers are lying and my cup of water is lying. You make your imaginary side table next to your chair inside, and on that place a bunch of flowers, not necessarily these, any flower you like, in a vase, in a vase like this one or any vase of your choice. It's all imagination. You can imagine the best that you like. Best vase, best flowers, and a cup with a drink in it. Not necessarily water, any drink, the best that you like. Then have a little plate, is missing on my table, but you should have one, a little plate of a snack, the most delicious snack that you can think of or imagine. And that's a good setting to start our experiment. So, close your eyes and set it up.

[Pause in the video. Part of the sixth-floor-of-the-house experiment was not recorded.]

Tell me if you were able to do this experiment successfully. You had a feast, I guess. How many of you noticed flowers that were different than what you imagined they would be? Very good. How many of you saw flowers that you had never seen before? That's great. At least something new came up. How many of you smelled the flower and you could smell them? Very good. How many of you found a new scent that you never had before? Very good. How many of you had a drink which you had never had before? New drink? Nice. How many of you found that any of these things changed while you were seeing them? The flowers or the drink? Wow, that's great. In the physical world they don't change. Somehow something else happened there. How many of you enjoyed the snack? Oh, that's really something. How many of you still have a taste of the snack in your mouth now? Very good.

Why did we do this exercise? We did it to show that sense perceptions are independent of the physical senses. You did not see the flowers with these eyes, but you saw them. You didn't smell the flowers with this nose, but you smelled it. You didn't touch these things with your hands, but you touched them. You didn't eat the snack with this mouth. You ate. The taste is still there. How could you have all these sense perceptions, all sense perceptions that you are using in the physical body, without use of the physical body at all? What did we learn?

We learned sense perceptions are not dependent on the physical body. They function independently. Where do they function? They function in the body that we used. What body was that? With which body did you taste these things? With which body did you look at things? You were not looking with this body at all. There was no role being played by this body in this exercise. Then which body was able to do all these things? That is the inner cover inside of this physical body, and we call it the astral body, the sensory body, the sense perceptions receiving body, sense perception generating body, and that is the very next step in meditation. When you withdraw attention from here, you go and use that body all the time. That's the body that transmigrates when you die and get into a new body. That's

the body that can be reborn. That's the body that has a much longer life—the one you just used—than the life of this body. That body was alive before you were born in this body, and that body will survive even when you die in this body. It was not created by this mind, this brain, or this body.

This experience was not generated...this experience is not based upon your memories. This experience made things change which don't happen at all in this physical world. You saw things which do not exist here. You can see a lot more. There's a whole wide world sitting there. We just did a little experiment to show that little switching of attention to behind the eyes can reveal so much experience of the inner body to you. It was an experience of the astral self. Astral body is not something that is so unique somewhere walking out of body and all that. With this body you could walk out whenever you like. It's the body constituting of your imagination, and imagination not as imaginary as we think. All imagination comes from this astral body, all imagination, even in the physical system.

Therefore, you just had an intimate contact with an inner body that does all the sense perceptions for you and puts them through this body, and you ascribe those perceptions to the organs of this body. What you saw without opening these eyes, you think you see other things by opening these eyes. They are being seen by the same eye, but you associated with these eyes, and, therefore, you get limited vision. We limit our perceptions because we channel them only through the physical body. With the other body you could have all kind of experiences. Shortly we'll also have experiences of flying in the sky, going wherever we like. We'll have it during this meditation workshop. We have those capacities to go to real places, not imagined places, whatever we call reality. Reality is all relative. We are covered by the physical body, only the physical world is real. We leave the physical body, the astral world is the only reality. Physical world becomes like a dream. We go to the causal body, the body of the mind, body of the thoughts, that becomes the only reality. We go beyond that, and the spiritual world is the only reality. We have only one reality at one time.

I'll at the end of the workshop also explain to you how you can have all realities at the same time, too, and know they're all unreal and they're all real at the same time. Towards the end, please remind me I want to let you have that experience, too. That's the greatest experience you can have in meditation.

Anyway, this was an introduction to you how imagination works, and you used that very effectively—I am very happy—and how attention works. First exercise was you can put your attention where you like in this body. You did it. Second exercise was you can imagine what you like. You did it. Now you are ready for meditation. In meditation we'll stay with the concept that this body is a house, and we're living in it, and the best place to meditate is the sixth floor of this house. So, we will stay in the sixth floor of this house for the rest of our meditation workshop. We'll stay behind the eyes and use the power of imagination to

imagine we are in the center. We'll not look at ourselves, just imagine, feel that we are there. Just have a feeling. When you feel you are there, you'll be able to know the physical eyes are in front of you, the ears are on either side, there's your head on top, there's your throat below, chin below. You'll know exactly by imagining you are in the center of this head that you are not anywhere else but only in the center. When you do that, if you can sustain yourself there for 10 minutes, you'll be filled with light. It's as simple as that. If you can sustain that experience of imagination in the center of the head, you'll see light and things that you have never seen before. But if you're scattered, which means while you are trying to do that you are thinking of other things, then it will take time. That means the problems in meditation are not knowing where to sit for meditation. The problem is how to avoid these distractions. We'll come to that later, how to avoid all kind of distractions to proper meditation. But in meditation we'll do a preliminary exercise right now to sit, how to imagine that we are sitting in the center of the head in the physical body, and if we can do that successfully and not think of anything else, we've made a good head start on this meditation course.

So, once again, let's go back to the house and the sixth floor. Close your eyes and look at the house. Now remember, the house might be made of flesh and bones, but it's a house. You can't move it around. You have to be still, upright. We don't want a bent house. We don't want a house that's tilted. Upright so that the other floors are below us, and we are on the sixth floor. Imagine that you are sitting on the sixth floor and looking all around at things that are around you. You can feel that the physical eyes are in front of you now. You can feel the ears are on either side, and just stay in the center and contemplate, "Who am I sitting in the center of this room? Am I still sitting on the chair? What do I look like? Who am I? Can I see my hands? Can I see my feet at least? I can't see my eyes, but I can see the rest of my body. What does it look like? Does it resemble the physical body in which I am sitting inside?" Explore these questions. Ask all questions and all thoughts about what is going on there and nothing outside. Be there, nowhere else. No other thoughts. Only what's going on there.

[Pause in the video. The rest of meditation was not recorded.]

Open your eyes. Welcome back. You can rub your eyes a little, your face, your hands. As we do more practice, you'll pull out awareness, and it will be easy to regain back physical consciousness easily by just rubbing a little. How many of you could do this and station yourself at the center of the head? Others will succeed next time we try again. Many of you have been able to imagine that you are in the center of the head. That is a necessary starting point for our meditation. We'll take a break for about half an hour and reassemble here.

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