

## Right Thinking

Recently, we had a very inspiring talk from Michael Galloway on Creative Meditation in which he said, very significantly, that, *preliminary* to all true meditation work is, “the ability to focus the power of thought”, or, concentrate. The Yoga Sutras say that focusing the power of thought, or sustained concentration *is* meditation, which then flowers forth as *contemplation, illumination and inspiration*.

We can say, then, that concentration is the basis for all true spiritual knowledge and experience as it is indeed preliminary to raising our consciousness from the basement of the mind to higher abstract and intuitive levels and enter contact with the Universal Mind.

So, I shall take up this topic of focus and the power of thought that Michael mentioned, seeing as it is essential to not only aspirational life but to success and achievement in any aspect of work in the world.

It is said in the same text that in fact, “*tireless* endeavour”, constant effort, is required to “restrain the fluctuations of the mind”.

For concentration on an object or anything, we must first focus our attention on that thing.

Where attention goes energy flows. Without attention, and later concentration, not only is there no meditation, but even in everyday activities, very little can be accomplished to our full satisfaction. We would agree that key to being *able* to concentrate, is a calm, orderly, unruffled mind; one that can focus on its object without being distracted.

Well this is where this subject, of being *able* to concentrate, on *anything*, becomes most pertinent. Because maintaining focus, in today’s world, is no small achievement.

We are living at a *time* of much emotional and mental unease, even dis-ease. Due to the great technological advances which have made instant communication and global connection possible, *and* so very useful, nevertheless, the flip side is our *hyper* connectivity and opportunities for excessive *disintegration* of the attention. There is a whole world full of things out there beeping and bleeping for our attention, news flashes, and notifications, and apparent urgencies seeking our response. We’ve reached a Crescendo of Distraction.

There is the story of a very clever cat that learned to serve coffee. As soon as he saw a mouse, he dropped all of it and ran for the mouse. How many times in the day might we be like that cat?

Even people of goodwill engaged in dedicated world service today can find themselves overwhelmed by demands, distractions, and the many directions in which their attention can go.

One of the ways to train the mind is through the ancient practice of Mindfulness. This practice has become increasingly popular in our culture now as we are slowly become more mentally polarized and are starting to learn to overcome the emotional nature. More and more people are realizing that they have a mind, that it is often overstimulated or full of things not useful to them, and that they fortunately have some control over this.

This is a good practice for everyone in everyday life. To recognize that the focus of our mind needs to be on the spot present with us, ready for our use. If it's miles away somewhere else on something else, it's out of our control, it's not of use to us, and it's increasing the habit of dividing our attention.

For the practice of Mindfulness, no daily task is too menial. When we connect the mind with where we are and what we are doing now, it is not then on limiting, personality driven thoughts and it is less likely to be off creating mischief. We can learn from this practice to fasten our thought to whatever we wish. This practice is very basic to the enormous capacity and power of the human mind for concentration and illumination. Yet, it is so basic, that it is often, the most overlooked.

No matter how advanced we are on the path, all day, every day we have to make choices as to what we think.

Right thinking is clear thinking; it's based on right values and a sense of good will; it's not clouded with criticism, doubt, worry or fear. Very simply, right thinking raises us up; wrong thinking brings us down. And because thought energy penetrates the mental bodies of other human beings, our thoughts take others up or down with us.

This is a great responsibility to recognize.

Thoughts are things, building blocks, and with each thought, and indeed each word, we are building, creating something. Thoughts are creative because energy follows thought which a form on the mental plane is. Once it is created, it leads and conducts energy according to its qualities. Our whole system responds to these energies. The nature of the thoughts we have determines the kind of energy that builds our life.

So, what do we want to build? What do we want to create? And how do we do that? Whether it's something personal, political, social, or spiritual, we can create a noble vision and a plan, and we can hold to it. But it often requires fierce determination not to be deflected.

There's a popular slogan being bandied about here in the UK at the moment. It's about "Taking Back Control", the great battle between opposing political sides who each want to take control. But the real battle for control, is with ourselves first. Are we in control of our own minds and hearts? Are we able to think clearly, critically and with discernment? Can we see the need and the problem? Can we unemotionally outline solutions? Are we prepared to work towards those solutions, seeing what can be done and what cannot be done? Do we recognize others who have the same vision? Do we support them, with our thoughts and speech? Will we work with them? How do we maintain our strength and focus and help others to do the same?

There is so much to be done on the personal level before we change the world. But this work at a personal level *is* changing the world.

We need, beyond the distraction, and the impinging forces of fear and confusion, to reclaim our sovereign power of discernment, clarity and focus. And build a lighted house wherein all humanity can dwell. And for any lighted house, it's not enough if the foundations are only partially right.

In our work building an etheric web of triangles for our planet, a foundation upon which the greater plan for humanity can grow, the building blocks we use are our clear, focused thoughts and our higher purified emotions.

And those building blocks themselves are formed through our continuous, daily effort of training the mind and the heart to think rightly.

People ask, “What can we do?” This is something we all can do, and we really must do.

In our lifetime, perhaps there has never been a greater need, for real thinkers, and for those willing to dedicate their time, their light and their energy, to controlling and focussing their thought, raising their level of consciousness and so help dissipate the astral miasma plaguing the world.

This will not be accomplished by someone else, somewhere else, nor by one leader or one nation. Because even by the falling of water drops, is the pot filled.

The Tibetan says this: “I tell you that you are needed, even the very least of you; and I assure you that groups of students working in unison and with deep and unfaltering love for each other, can achieve significant results”.

So, here is a potent thought to take away with us from the Master Guide, the Lord Shri Krishna. He said:

“When the mind, completely controlled, is centred in the Self, free from all earthly desires, then is the man truly spiritual.

The wise man who has conquered his mind and is absorbed in the Self, is as a lamp which does not flicker, since it stands sheltered from every wind.

Know thyself, then, to be the undying One.

Control thy mind.

For through that mind the undying One can be known”.

Alex Ratcliffe

