



Spiritual Studies Institute

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY LIGHT MEDITATION**

Uta Linde Hoehne, Ph.D.

*We honor and thank all who came before us,  
all teachers from whom we have learned and who have  
been there for us with infinite patience, love, and wisdom.*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Our lives can be full of frantic schedules, crisis and drama, worries, fears, pain, and disease—all representing obstacles to a sense of fulfillment and happiness. What are the solutions? The solutions have been with us for a long time. Simply relax and go within. Meditate.<sup>1</sup>

The Community Light Meditation (CLM) is a tool used to overcome obstacles. It can give us a map to our hearts, minds, and souls—in short, to ourselves. We can continue leading our life with its familiar routines with one exception—the addition of a daily 20-minute meditation. Meditation, however, is not a quick fix for our problems, nor does it provide instant answers to our questions without effort on our part. We still have to think for ourselves and be responsible for ourselves.

#### **What is the CLM?**

CLM is a guided meditation involving a process of focusing and utilizing higher stages of consciousness. Centered in the here and now, the process moves from the more instinctual to the more mindful stages of consciousness.

CLM consists of five steps: concentration, meditation, contemplation, illumination, and inspiration. Similar to Jacob's ladder, though in this instance not referring to angels, CLM allows humans to step up and down the "consciousness ladder". It can be thought of as a process of becoming and of letting go. CLM is democratic and demonstrates equality because everyone can learn it, and it can be practiced any time and any place. In addition, it is an effective stress reduction meditation.

#### **How did the CLM come about?**

It was conceived in August 2005, during one of my darkest hours, as I was crying out to Soul for direction and guidance. The answer came in the form of this tool, a process that allowed me to access answers while at the same time still having to

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<sup>1</sup> From "Brain Longevity: The Breakthrough Medical Program that Improves Your Mind and Memory" by D. S. Khalsa and C. Stauth.

think for myself. In the course of the following months and years, through group life and group meditation, the CLM was rounded out, like a pebble in a riverbed being stirred and polished into a wondrous stone.

### **What is the CLM based on?**

The CLM is based on the following ancient and modern texts:

1. ***Bhagavad-Gita***: An ancient Hindu text that presents a description of the Soul depicted through a dialogue between Krishna (representing the Soul) and Arjuna (representing the aspirant), thus revealing the Soul's glory behind every form.
2. ***Yoga Sutras***: An ancient Hindu doctrine that explains a step-by-step graded system of development of the Soul.
3. ***New Testament***: Biblical text that focuses on the power of the Soul as demonstrated in the life of Christ.
4. ***From Intellect to Intuition***<sup>2</sup>: Modern-day text by A. A. Bailey, which interprets the above-mentioned teachings and techniques in modern-day language.

### **How is the CLM implemented?**

By using the mind in connection with but separate from the brain, attention is focused from one stage of consciousness to the next—or up and down the “consciousness ladder”. Sound is utilized in mantras and the sacred word OM to open up and stabilize ourselves in different states of consciousness.

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<sup>2</sup> “From Intellect to Intuition” by A. A. Bailey

## **THE FIVE STAGES OF THE COMMUNITY LIGHT MEDITATION**

### **STAGE I: CONCENTRATION**

Focus your mind in the lower abdomen.  
Draw all senses inward.  
Move energy upward.

At the beginning of this stage, we relax the entire body, calm the mind, and listen inside ourselves until we can sense the body's rhythm. We use the sacred word OM to center, to open up, and focus. Since ancient times, humanity has known the power of sound. It can either lift us upward toward the heavens, like a bird spreading its wings under a gently upward breeze, or it can carry us downward. Besides other factors, its effect depends upon the intention. During the stage of concentration, we intend to let go of what would distract us and to welcome that which would assist us.

Our mind is an aspect of our mentality. It can function independently from our physical brain, such as in fantasy, dreaming, and memory recall. In focusing, the mind's energy becomes more intense and precise like a laser beam. With practice, the ability to focus becomes clearer and clearer. This is an innate quality of our mind.

In the beginning of the meditation, we focus our mind at one area in the lower abdomen, approximately 0.5 inches below the navel and 2.3 inches inward depending on the body type. The lower abdomen is the most instinctual part of the physical body. In addition, we focus on the etheric and not physical body parts, because the mind's focus can be very intense. The scriptures compare the effects of a focused mind with fire, because it illuminates everything. Therefore, it is healthier and safer to focus on the etheric body only. To focus here grounds us and connects us to the moment.

Our five senses connect us with our outer and inner world by informing us of our outer and inner environments. During the meditation this flow of information can distract us. Using the breath, we draw our senses inward, calming them and putting them temporarily to rest. The following activities are symbolic of what we are attempting to achieve.

- Calling all family members to come home to gather around the dinner table.
- In school, after the break, the bell rings. All children stream in from outside to inside the classroom.

When we have calmed down our five senses and we are no longer engaged with them, then we begin working on an energetic level.

How and why do we move the energy upward?

With moving our focus slowly upward through the different energy centers of the spine, our consciousness also moves upward. It is a process of becoming and letting go. How can we accomplish this? To help us with this process we imagine an energy

ball. By focusing on this energy ball, we imagine that it slowly rolls upward, vertebrae by vertebrae. We breathe in and together with the breath we move our focus and our mind upward. The symbolism of a stepladder, step-by-step or vertebrae-by-vertebrae, might help us here. In this manner we touch each energy center or chakra, one after the other<sup>3-4</sup>. With time and practice, some people have even the (imaginary) sensation of a gentle upward massage.

Key thoughts:

- Intention
- Breath
- Mind
- Senses
- Becoming and letting go
- Energy centers or chakras
- Etheric body

## **STAGE II: MEDITATION**

Transcended emotion.  
Mind focused and clear.  
Aligned with soul.

What are emotions and why should we transcend them in this meditation? Emotions are the intermediary between sensations and thoughts. They are in the middle—the connecting link between the two. What we sense in our outer and inner environments can be translated into a whole range of emotions, for instance, from devotional aspiration, to most tender affection, to intense hatred.

Sometimes emotions can be compared to colors in terms of their whole range of shades, tones, and hues. They present us with the opportunity to experience life in all its nuances. Similar to colors, emotions present a whole range of vibrational experiences, each unique in its quality. Using these concepts can give us the opportunity to help guide us to a more balanced integration of elements required for higher levels of conscious awareness.

We experience feelings and emotions on several levels and through polar opposites. These layers are as follows:

1. There are feelings with no thoughts attached to them. They are linked to our sensory perceptions. They are pre-verbal, organic, and polar (for example, happy/unhappy, content/discontent).

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<sup>3</sup> From "Tai Chi Classics," by W. Liao.

<sup>4</sup> From "Awaken Healing Energy Through the Tao," by M. Chia

Often, we are pulled in two directions by opposing feelings. For instance, we may say: "I feel happy and unhappy at the same time" and we are caught in that feeling. Then we are no longer able to see our life and life events in context – from a higher point of view. We lost sight of the rest of our surroundings, for instance, feeling trapped and not seeing a way out.

Generally, if something is pleasurable, we want it to continue. Likewise, if something gives us pain, we want it to stop.

It might happen quite frequently that we are torn emotionally, pulled simultaneously in opposite directions. For example, we might be happy and unhappy at the same time. Sometimes even our feelings are like ping-pong balls, bouncing back and forth between the two polar opposites; one moment we may feel deeply depressed and the next moment we may feel euphoric.

2. When thoughts are attached to feelings, they evolve into emotions; therefore, emotions are the intermediary between feelings and thoughts. The qualifying, discriminating aspect of the mind identifies what is felt. We can now give a name or label to the feeling and can communicate about it to others clearly (e.g., "I'm happy, because..." or "I feel jealous,..." or "I feel ignored and I'm angry, because..."). We are able to communicate with others.

During meditation, it is helpful to transcend the emotions because they can cloud our spiritual perceptions.<sup>5</sup> What does it mean to *transcend*, and how is this accomplished? To transcend means to *rise above*. Here, during the stage *Meditation*, we leave our feelings and emotions behind. When we shift our focus in the form of the energy ball into the head, we have risen above and have left the emotions behind.

This is not repressing emotions; rather we are turning our attention upward for a certain period of time. One method of doing this is to tell our emotions to wait until we return our attention back to them. It is similar to telling a pet to wait for us when we leave the home, promising to return later.

To use a metaphor: a mountaineer, while ascending to the peak, is leaving behind all that might burden and hinder him, first in the valley and later at base camp. When he finally reaches the highest point, he can expect a clear, far-reaching and magnificent view over all that lies below. That experience and knowledge he will then bring back once he returns.

When we are going through the five stages of the CLM, we can have similar experience. First we leave everything behind and from a higher consciousness we attain a clearer view of our life. Returning to everyday consciousness we bring back wisdom, illumination and inspiration.

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<sup>5</sup> From "Walking the Middle Path: Balancing the Pairs of Opposites Through Systemic Interactions," by A. Stinson

How and why do we focus and clear the mind?

Without emotions to distract us, the mind becomes quiet and ready for the soul's impression. At the same time, there is no negation of the normal mental functioning. When we practice meditation regularly, we will be able to maintain this state of concentration and a clear, focused state of functioning longer and longer.

If we get distracted, we can have a gentle, but firm allowing attitude. We simply allow the distractions to be there. We are kind, but firm. We ask ourselves: Who am I? Or, Who are we? The answer is: We are not our feelings, emotions, or even our thoughts. We are the observer, the higher consciousness, the soul, or the self. We are the soul and we are only expressing and experiencing ourselves through thoughts, emotions, and feelings.

What is Soul or higher consciousness?

Soul can be understood as the highest aspect of consciousness within us. It has many names, for instance, the observer, self, soul, or even the master. It is the core of everything good, beautiful, and real in us. Soul exists not only in us. It exists in everything to a different degree, in the sun, earth, humans, animals and plants – even in the individual atom.

When we attempt to train ourselves to keep our personality—the physical, emotional, and mental aspects—in an attitude of one-pointed, positive expectancy, then we are able to have an intimate relationship with the soul. Now we can say that we are aligned with Soul. Symbolically, we could say, “We are, with our energy centers, aligned with the soul like pearls on a string.”

How can we understand the personality as an integration of physical/etheric, emotional, and mental aspects?

Ancient wisdom teachings hold that man unites within himself mineral, plant, animal, human, and divine aspects or features. The mineral and plant elements compose the physical/etheric aspects. The animal component makes up the emotional aspect, and the divine component can express the abstract mental and intuitional aspects. We unite all these different stages of consciousness within us, from sentiency, to instinct, to feelings-emotions, to concrete thoughts, to the potential of abstract mind and intuition.

During this stage of meditation, we again use sound. An ancient mantra opens up and stabilizes our consciousness in soul alignment. The sound will attract to our personality substance of finer vibrations and will discharge that which is coarser. It will also help us to align by creating a bridge, a direct connection between the brain, the mind, and the soul. In ancient wisdom teachings, this connection is called *Antahkarana* or Rainbow Bridge.

Key Thoughts:

- Feelings and emotions
- Transcendence
- Soul and/or higher consciousness

- Soul alignment
- Personality
- *Antahkarana* or Rainbow Bridge

### **STAGE III: CONTEMPLATION**

Transcended thoughts.  
 Identified with soul.  
 Interlude of silence.

During contemplation, we move our focus from inside the head to above the head. Without straining, we push our focus out and above the crown of the head. How high depends on what is possible and comfortable for each of us, perhaps only a few inches or feet, or even farther. Whatever we may be able to do is all right. It is appropriate and will work for us.

Our thoughts are left behind temporarily. We now identify with that part within ourselves, which is identical with the soul, the highest aspect within us. When we are able to thoroughly yield to soul, we find oneness. If we would remain identified with our personality, we would sense separation and feel excluded from this world. The keys to accomplish identification with soul are relaxation, concentration, meditation, and imagination.

What are thoughts?

Thoughts are ideas clothed in thought substance with a specific purpose.<sup>6</sup> For instance, the divine idea "Love" is the manifestation of God Himself. "Love is the life expression of God Himself; love is the coherent force which makes all things whole ..., and love is all that is."<sup>7</sup> If we would love in such a way described in this quote, we would directly express soul love. Its purpose would be healing and uniting. Personality love in contrast is emotional, full of feelings, and most of the time, on some level of consciousness, its purpose is self-serving. If we are honest with ourselves, in our personal loves, we most often have certain expectancies.

When we identify with the personality, we can have access to what is called the concrete mind, intellect, and thoughts. Soul resides just above the stratum of the concrete mind, namely in the abstract mind. It is composed of the highest substance of the mental realm.

To use a metaphor, our mind is like a river with the stream of thoughts or streams of consciousness flowing along the riverbanks with certain breadth, depth, currents, rapids, and so forth. There are healthy rivers and thoughts with plenty of life in them, nourishing everything in their path. However, there are murky or even stagnant rivers or thoughts as well, more taking rather than giving life.

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<sup>6</sup> From "A Treatise on Cosmic Fire," by A. A. Bailey

<sup>7</sup> From "Esoteric Healing," p. 356, by A. A. Bailey

During contemplation, we enter the world of the abstract mind, the world of Soul. It is Soul now who is thinking. There is a profound silence within the soul state, which, in time, can even penetrate consciousness during our daily life. While listening intently to the silence we may discover many delicate harmonious sounds and rhythms. It can bring us closer and closer to the world of the divine.

To describe the world of Soul, we must use the language of the physical world and clothe that which is experienced in pictures, symbols, and metaphors. Consequently, the descriptions are only approximations tinged with distortions.

In the state of contemplation, we have different options. If we mediate alone, we proceed directly to the next step.

If we are part of a group, on this level of higher consciousness, we can join and integrate with the souls of the group members. This is accomplished by saying each of our names and/or chosen gift qualities and by uniting with it.

A gift quality is a feature we are inspired to manifest in ourselves with the intention of service to the group, the community, and humanity. Examples would be "joy," "clarity," "illumination," and "truth." Through naming and connecting, we envision each gift quality aiding and strengthening the individual member, the group, and humanity as a whole. We imagine all as points of Soul light, fusing and blending to make a radiant sun. We think and feel as one group; we have a sense of universality and at the same time a sense of individual identity.

We have the choice to contemplate with or without a seed thought. If we choose a seed thought and concentrate on it during this stage of meditation, this will help us to find answers to our questions. Simultaneously, it sets boundaries to guide and protect us in this new level of consciousness.

To use a metaphor, especially for beginners of meditation, a seed thought is like a playpen for small children. The playpen protects and supports them until they can stand and walk safely on their own. However, a seed thought also can be understood as a garden surrounded with high protective walls. Within the safety of the garden, we can reflect and ponder upon what is close to our heart and soul.

A seed thought could be a line from an inspirational song, a poem and/or a prayer, or even one of the chosen gift qualities. Examples would be: *Loving Understanding*, *Freedom from Ties*, or from the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, "*Make me an instrument of thy peace.*" It is preferable for the beginner as well as the advanced meditator that the seed thought is uncomplicated.<sup>8</sup>

We may also meditate without a seed thought. The intensity is important here. We are holding our attention, relaxed, but focused as high as possible. The result is a

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<sup>8</sup> From "Techniques of Soul Alignment: The Rays, the Subtle Bodies and the Use of Keywords" by K. Abraham.

continuous letting go and becoming, letting go from everything unnecessary so that Soul can find its expression in our daily life.

Symbolically, we can compare this process with building a funnel or a chimney that must be built correctly and routinely maintained so that the fire can burn brightly and the smoke escapes.

During the meditation without a seed thought we are building a bridge or a connection from our daily life to the higher states of consciousness. The result is the burning of a spiritual fire permeating every aspect of our life. Esoterically we then could say, "We are holding our mind in the light."

Each of these approaches has its advantage. When we become more experienced in meditation, we can do both: contemplate with and without a seed thought at the same time and/or intermittently.

Key thoughts:

- Thought
- Soul identification and Soul alignment
- Group integration
- Gift quality
- Seed thought
- Meditation with and without seed thought

#### **STAGE IV: ILLUMINATION**

Thoughts reactivated.  
Loving understanding.  
Truth formulated and expressed in words.

We return our focus from the soul back to our mind and brain. Subsequently, there can be a down-pouring stream of Soul light, knowledge, or illumination. In the beginning, it might be only for a moment or moments. However, with practice and time, it will increase more and more.

The return path or the decent from the consciousness ladder takes us from soul to mind and back to the brain. We now ask ourselves: In what ways are mind and brain different or the same? Our mind is intangible and non-local, not bound to time and space. It is subjective and able to link us into higher states of consciousness, for instance, into soul states or even higher. Our brain, on the other hand, is objective and local. It has a place and time in our life. The brain connects us with mind and also with the physical body, with the world of sense, feelings, and emotions. Mind and brain are now connected.

The thoughts are activated in the stage of illumination as a natural reaction to the down pouring of energy. It is as if all of a sudden all veils are dropped. Answers to questions become clear. In a way, it is as if we were looking at ourselves from the

outside in, observing ourselves with loving understanding. If we practice this meditation the state of illumination will become more and more frequent, and with time, perhaps, instantaneous.

We are able to formulate and express in spoken language what we received in a knowing way, often without words. Through our language and the spoken word, an impression is brought out from the subtle world and becomes concrete. It can be communicated to our fellowmen. This subtle and natural process makes it possible for us to be present in humbly serving others.

Key thoughts:

- Mind and brain
- Subtle and concrete worlds
- Service

## **STAGE V: INSPIRATION**

Emotions reactivated.  
Union of heart and head.  
Life of inspiration.

According to a thesaurus, the word *inspiration* is defined as "revelation, bright idea, motivation, flash and fire".

Now we are able to sense the fire of inspiration within us. We are able to apply it to our own lives and are able to inspire and motivate others. Inspiration creates truth, beauty, and the Divine in art, science, psychology, and spirituality. It fills life with energy and joy. In this stage of inspiration we welcome our emotions back in a more enlightened manner. What might have been a burden before might now become an opportunity for inner growth. For example, feelings of anger, denial, and judgment can now be acknowledged and transformed into loving acceptance and tolerance.

We talked about the polar nature of our feelings during the stage of *meditation*. During the stage of *inspiration*, we sense polarities again, but now we can experience both polarities at once, not only horizontally on the feeling level, but also vertically on several levels of consciousness. For instance, we can sense the universal and simultaneously the specific. We could say that we have inspiration, while at the same time we do not have it. This has nothing to do with us individually. To understand this process better, we could use the analogy of electricity. It is energy, which is being transmitted through a wire. Electricity is *in* the wire, but is *not* the wire. In short, inspiration gives us the opportunity to have a more complete understanding of life.

During this stage of inspiration, we imagine heart and head becoming one, giving us meaning, understanding, and intelligent love. This makes it possible for us to become not only self- but also group-conscious. We are becoming aware of and caring for the greater whole.

How can we unite heart and head?

Through a conscious and creative engagement. The “as if” method will help us here. We imagine “as if” the heart and head are united. This imagination releases creative energies. The “as if” imagination activates creative energy, one of the steps in the creative process. When we follow this process – over time – heart and head will become a unity. We speak now of the “thinking heart”, a milestone in spiritual development.

Esoteric knowledge reveals that the heart is the custodian of the power of imagination. “As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, this method can bring release and happiness.

How is the energy of inspiration experienced?

For the one who experiences and/or who transmits inspiration to others, it appears like soft champagne bubbles filled with love and light. It streams from above into the crown of the head, and fills the whole body from head to toe. It endows the quality of spontaneously reaching out a helping hand without expectations. It stimulates the true, beautiful, and real in others. We could use the analogy of the “green” thumb. Living organisms grow, thrive, and become beautiful because of a loving touch.

The one who is inspired, the recipient, becomes more himself. He feels seen, touched, encouraged, and energized. However, we cannot forget that this energy is not ours. It flows from the divine through Soul to us. The practice of the Community Light Meditation helps us to develop this ability. We link our consciousness with soul, yet we keep both feet firmly on the ground. To a certain extent, it demonstrates the interconnectedness of the visible and invisible world we live in and the great opportunities that are provided for us.

We close our meditation with the *Great Invocation*. It is a non-denominational prayer identifying God as the Intelligent Being of our universe and includes all humanity. The word Christ is used and symbolizes soul, expressed through love, right intention and mindfulness. We are asking for love, light, and power for all of humanity. Strengthened and inspired, we re-enter our daily life.

To summarize, CLM is a guided meditation involving a process of focusing and utilizing higher stages of consciousness. Centered in the here and now, the process moves from stage to stage, from the more instinctual to the more mindful stages of consciousness.

The Community Light Meditation consists of five steps: concentration, meditation, contemplation, illumination, and inspiration. It can be thought of as a process of becoming and letting go. It is also a transformative process. Feelings, emotions, and thoughts that might have been burdensome before can now become an opportunity for growth.

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<sup>9</sup> From “Discipleship in the New Age II,” p. 555, by A. A. Bailey

Key thoughts:

- Spiritual fire
- Universal and specific
- Thinking heart
- Group consciousness
- Creative imagination
- The Great Invocation

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR THE COMMUNITY LIGHT MEDITATION**

The following Glossary provides explanations of terms used in the Community Light Meditation.

**Aspirant:** An aspirant has reached a point in his life that enables him to take responsibility for his own affairs, personal feelings, health reactions, and finances. An individual who realizes that there is a greater meaning to life than momentary amusement and material satisfaction and gradually becomes aware of one of the many approaches to Soul or Self.

**Chakra (Energy Center):**

A Sanskrit word meaning *wheel*. There are seven chakras or major intersections of force in the etheric, emotional, and mental bodies. The seven chakras are located in the following areas: the base, sacral, solar plexus, heart, throat, ajna, and head centers<sup>10</sup>. Each is made of a more refined substance than the preceding center.

**Christ:** Christ is known by many names: for instance, Avatar, Bodhisattva, Coming One, Great Lord, Jesus, Maitreya, and Master Jesus. Christ consciousness can express itself in the human heart through love, goodwill, and harmlessness.

**Disciple:** One who has recognized the increasing needs of the world. He approaches these problems mentally and spiritually, rather than emotionally. He possesses a finer sense of values and is dedicated to meeting human needs through expressions of love and goodwill. The disciple's mind is fluid and flexible. He is capable of adjusting techniques, presentations, ideals, and methods according to the needs of the moment and the people involved.

**Esoteric, Occult:**

Both terms are synonymous, generally referring to knowledge that is somewhat hidden and/or restricted to a small group. Meditation is a path to developing that knowledge.

**Ether:** Ether is the form-making substance within the universe. It exists in different gradation from the most fine to the less dense to the almost dense physical. Ether is the starting point of all manifestations in the universe

**Etheric Spine:**

The energetic substance of its counterpart, the physical spine.

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<sup>10</sup> From "The Soul and Its Mechanism," p. 111, by A. A. Bailey

**Gift Quality:** A chosen soul quality an individual is inspired to manifest in himself with the intention of service to the group, the community, and humanity. Examples include joy, clarity, and truth.

**Guru:** A spiritual teacher who is a master in metaphysical and ethical doctrines. A guru may have followers to direct and guide. The teachings and the philosophies of A. A. Bailey, as followed by the Spiritual Studies Institute, differentiate themselves from guru worship. They do not ask for *followers*, but consider themselves as co-workers and work as a team.

**Hierarchy:** The hierarchy consists of a group of masters who have reached a certain relative perfection. They engage in the continuous development of the Divine Plan. This group of spiritually developed beings is subjectively connected to each other. Within our planetary system, Christ and Buddha are at the center of the spiritual hierarchy.

**Initiate:** (L. initiatus). One who enters into a new phase of learning due to getting in touch with mystical experiences and secret knowledge.

**Initiation:** A subjective expansion of consciousness. Initiation is a group event rather than an individual event. It does not relate to something glamorous that is publicly recognized or acclaimed. Initiation is a growth in experience and the attainment of a point of tension between that which is most important and that which not important. Through a step-by-step process in the awareness of holding that point of tension, the initiate recognizes increased responsibilities toward the group, the community, and humanity.

**Intuition:** It is not related to psychic impressions. Intuition does not mean to have a vision, to hear the silence, or to have a joyful attitude towards the teachings. Intuition is the clear perception by the mind of some aspect of truth emanating from the Universal Mind via the Soul, allowing us to recognize symbols, arrive at meaning and understanding, and express intelligent love. It is an expression of Soul.

**Master:** On an individual level, the true master resides in the heart, in the higher consciousness, or represents the true spirituality in every being. Formally, within the ranks of the hierarchy a master is a being who has dedicated his life to service to humanity. He is the embodiment of perfect poise, a clear point of view, and loving understanding. A Master does not refer to himself as a master, but as a "disciple of a certain degree". Masters do not *tell* but *motivate* individuals to become the best they can be at all times, and act from their highest level of being. An example of a master is the Dalai Lama.

**Mind:** Comprised of the concrete mind and the abstract mind. Human beings have relatively easy access to the lower subplane of the mental plane, which is the concrete mind or intellect. From a human perspective,

Soul resides just above this stratum, namely in the abstract mind. Access to the abstract mind is achieved, for example, through meditation. Both the concrete and the abstract mind can be experienced in connection with but also separate from the brain.

**Mystic and Occultist:**

The mystic approaches God devotionally and primarily through the heart. God and the divine energies are recognized and felt externally. The occultist approaches God through a focused mind through the head. He recognizes God as immanent and looks at himself as His reflection. The advanced disciple and aspirant unite both the mystic and the occultist approaches. In his heart, the qualities and energies of heart and head are unified.

**New Group of World Servers:**

A group of people who serve all humanity and focus on the will-to-good. They contribute to the betterment of humanity and support the development of unity. They belong to all disciplines, religions, and countries. They are linked subjectively by their common goal. The United Nations and the Red Cross are examples.

**Personality:** Composed of three aspects: the mental, emotional (or astral), and physical/etheric. When the three aspects of the personality function as a unit, we speak of an integrated personality, which opens the door to soul awareness in addition to concern about human beings outside our closest family members and friends. We become involved in activities focused on the wellbeing of the community, country, and humanity. We have the need to serve others without having any expectations of results and rewards in whatever form they may take.

**Plan:** The part of the Plan that we can understand relates to the ending of selfishness and separateness for all humanity. It can be achieved on a daily basis in the "will-to-good" and the "will to do no harm." We learn from the spiritual texts that the Plan is created by the spiritual hierarchy and the masters.

**Psychic Powers:**

Remnant powers from the ancient past include "seeing things" or "hearing voices". During that time the emotional nature was developing and many aspirants learned how to open up to the emotional or astral worlds. During ancient times, psychic abilities were considered normal.

Today, many aspirants seek to develop not so much the emotional, but the mental nature. Developing intellectual abilities and mental poise provides the opportunity to open up to the more inclusive consciousness of soul and intuition. Therefore, engaging in psychic activities can be confusing, misleading, and even dangerous for the modern aspirant.

**Philosophy, Religion, Theology:**

Philosophy is the study of truth. Religion is a particular institutionalized system of theological beliefs and practices. Theology is the study of divinity.

**Purpose:** This term is related to the Great Invocation. It refers to the Will of God in connection with the development (evolution) of life on earth. "The purpose which the Masters know and serve." The purpose in regard to humanity should be understood as furthering the unity of humanity, of all nation and races.

**Seed Thought (Meditation Theme):**

A word or concept to think through into a more inclusive, loving understanding. This provides enlightened answers to questions, while at the same time giving protective boundaries.

**Soul:** Sometimes referred to as Ego, higher consciousness, Higher Self, or Observer. Soul relates to higher cognitive functioning or abstract thinking, which can relate to and identify with the divine in all life, including other human beings. This term is also used in humanistic transpersonal psychology.

If we can concentrate mentally on this soul level, we can experience true love, understanding, and intuition. It is possible to experience unity with all living beings while maintaining one's own identity. Meditation is a path to achieving that stage.

**Substance:** A concept that can be understood on a soul level and relates to the sum total of atomic life out of which each form manifests, from the smallest to the largest. The universe, sun, moon, and fixed stars partake in this process of bringing substance into matter and returning it again to its source. It is a constant process of becoming and letting go.

"Substance is energy." "Substance is cosmic etheric matter, or that of which the four higher planes of our seven planes are composed. From the human angle, ability to work with and in the cosmic etheric substance demonstrates first of all when the abstract mind awakens and begins to impress the concrete mind."<sup>11</sup> Intuition is an idea covered by the etheric substance.

**The Great Invocation:**

A non-denominational prayer acknowledging and honoring God as the Intelligent Being of our universe. In this prayer, the word *Christ* is used to encompass a universal consciousness expressing love, good will, and harmlessness.

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<sup>11</sup> From "Telepathy and the etheric vehicle," p. 189, by A. A. Bailey

# KEY THOUGHTS AND STUDY QUESTIONS

## INTRODUCTION

Key Thoughts:

- Concentration and focus
- Consciousness ladder
- Creative sound

Questions to Ponder:

- 0.1 *In what way do you think meditation could reduce stress?*
- 0.2 *How can listening inside ourselves and becoming aware of the body's rhythm through the breath and heartbeat, for instance, help us to concentrate?*
- 0.3 *Why do you think it is useful to be centered in the here and now while being focused on the more mindful stages of consciousness?*
- 0.4 *Instead of focusing immediately as high as possible, what could be the benefit of using a "consciousness ladder" or step-by-step process in meditation?*
- 0.5 *What are the qualities of the human mind that make it possible to focus and move from one stage of consciousness to another, or move up and down the "consciousness ladder"?*
- 0.6 *In the greatest need and pain, divine help often seems to be the nearest. Do you think this is a common phenomenon? Why and/or why not?*
- 0.7 *What are your thoughts about the fact that the descriptions, explanations, and demonstrations about the soul have been around for thousands of years, and it is just now that a greater number of people are becoming interested in them?*
- 0.8 *What might be so different and special about the present time that makes the interest in the higher states of consciousness possible?*
- 0.9 *How could sound influence our state of consciousness?*

## FIVE STAGES OF THE COMMUNITY LIGHT MEDITATION

### STAGE I: CONCENTRATION

Key thoughts:

- Intention
- Breath
- Mind
- Senses
- Becoming and letting go
- Energy centers or chakras
- Etheric body

Questions to Ponder:

- 1.1 *Besides other benefits, what is the health benefit of relaxing, listening inside, and gently opening up to the sound?*
- 1.2 *Can you think of activities other than meditation when, despite distractions, narrowing the mind's focus can be of benefit?*
- 1.3 *What role does intention play in meditation and is it effective?*
- 1.4 *All creation seems purposeful. Can you imagine what the divine purpose of our sense organs and the senses might be?*

*Ears ..... Hearing  
Skin .....Feeling by Touch  
Eyes.....Sight  
Tongue .....Taste  
Nose..... Smell*

- 1.5 *What is the relationship between the dense physical and the etheric bodies, and how do they relate to each other?*
- 1.6 *What do you think could happen if in meditation we only focused on the physical body?*

- 1.7 *Is it possible that during meditation the instinctual part in us could get unduly stimulated and overtake us when we focus at the one area in the lower abdomen? Why and/or why not?*
- 1.8 *What is the relationship between our breath and sense perceptions? How do they influence each other?*
- 1.9 *What is the relationship between our mind, breath, energy centers, and states of consciousness?*

## **STAGE II: MEDITATION**

### Key Thoughts:

- Feelings and emotions
- Transcendence
- Soul and/or higher consciousness
- Soul alignment
- Personality
- Antahkarana or Rainbow Bridge

### Questions to Ponder:

- 2.1 *Do you think it is an opportunity to be able to become aware of and work with the several "onion" layers of our feeling-emotional-thought life? Would it not be better just to forget about all the unpleasant and painful feelings and, symbolically speaking, rise above them? Why and/or why not?*
- 2.2 *What could the following statement really mean: "We are, with our energy centers, aligned with soul like pearls on a string."*
- 2.3 *Please name the different states of consciousness of the personality. How do these different states of consciousness work together to make up one integrated personality? Can you recognize these different aspects within yourself?*
- 2.4 *What are names used for Soul and what do they mean? Why would we equate Soul with everything good, beautiful, and real?*

- 2.5 *What metaphors could we use to help us in the building process of the Antahkarana?*
- 2.6 *Why do we need to build a connection between the brain, the mind, and Soul? Why do we have to "work" for this connection? Is not the divine aspect already present at birth in all life forms including ourselves?*

### **STAGE III: CONTEMPLATION**

Key thoughts:

- Thought
- Soul identification and soul alignment
- Group integration
- Gift quality
- Seed thought
- Meditation with and without seed thought

Questions to Ponder:

- 3.1 *How can we shift our mental focus above the head and at the same time, symbolically speaking, have both feet firmly on the ground? What metaphors could assist us in this process?*
- 3.2 *In this meditation as a beginner, is it useful to try a step-by-step process and first raise a few inches, and then with time attempt to shift higher and higher? Would it not be more appropriate to raise the focus as high as possible?*
- 3.3 *There are many distractions during meditation. For instance, some of us may have "wandering" or even "racing" thoughts. How could such people focus and leave the thoughts behind? (See Appendix)*
- 3.4 *How can we identify with Soul? Is it possible to lose ourselves in this process? Why and/or why not?*
- 3.5 *What is the difference between soul alignment and soul identification?*
- 3.6 *Can you think of someone in human history who has expressed soul love?*

- 3.7 *How do you define thought and thought substance? (Review Glossary "substance")*
- 3.8 *Can you think about thoughts and/or concepts other than love, which might originate as divine ideas with a specific purpose?*
- 3.9 *Can you think of an example of stepping up a concrete thought into the abstract mind?*
- 3.10 *Why is the abstract mind composed of highest substance of the mental realm?*
- 3.11 *Please explain how it is possible that in the world of Soul we find profound silence while at the same time we might hear delicate harmonious sounds. Is this not paradoxical?*
- 3.12 *Please define in what ways a seed thought or meditation theme is used in this meditation.*
- 3.13 *Please define how the term "Gift Quality" is used in this meditation.*
- 3.14 *What are the benefits of both meditation with and meditation without seed thought?*

#### **STAGE IV: ILLUMINATION**

Key thoughts:

- Mind and brain
- Subtle and concrete worlds
- Service

Questions to Ponder:

- 4.1 *In what ways are the mind and brain different and/or the same?*

- 4.2 *Did you ever have the experience that seemed like you were looking at yourself from the outside in and observing yourself with loving understanding?*
- 4.3 *How are the subtle and concrete worlds interrelated, and how could we penetrate from the concrete into the subtle worlds?*
- 4.4 *How can we serve our fellow men and communicate in understandable language about our experiences in the subtle world without being disbelieved, mistrusted, and/or ridiculed? Please be specific.*

### **STAGE V: INSPIRATION**

Key thoughts:

- Spiritual fire
- Universal and specific
- Thinking heart
- Group consciousness
- Creative imagination
- The Great Invocation

Questions to Ponder:

- 5.1 *Can you remember times in your life when you felt both the universal and the specific simultaneously? Please give examples.*
- 5.2 *What is group consciousness, and why is it unfolding within the human heart and not in any other (etheric) organ or energy center?*
- 5.3 *In what ways would your life be the same and/or different if you would have truly developed a "thinking heart"?*
- 5.4 *Do you think that creative imagination could be a useful tool in the development of human consciousness and that perhaps it should even be taught in schools?*
- 5.5 *Inspiration is compared in this meditation to fire. Even in a meditation, is it not dangerous to "play" with fire?*

- 5.6 *Did you ever feel inspired by something and/or someone, feeling encouraged and energized to stretch beyond your personal boundaries?*
- 5.7 *What are your thoughts and feelings about a universal prayer like the "Great Invocation," uniting humanity in spite of all the (seeming) differences? Is this something new?*

## APPENDIX

### HOW TO DEAL WITH DIFFERENT DISTRACTIONS DURING MEDITATION

Below you will find a few distractions that might occur during meditation and methods to remedy them. Do not forget, however, the greatest distraction to a regular meditation is you.

- **Wandering mind:** Use the daisy method. Picture a daisy. When your mind wanders, let it wander around the outskirts of the flower petals. Let your mind go all the way out, only to return to the center.
- **Sluggish, sleepy mind:** Simply refocus your mind.
- **Restless mind** (like Mexican jumping beans): Allow the restlessness to be there. Breathe, relax, and refocus. You could also use the analogy of cars racing by (your thoughts) on a freeway. You tell yourself: "I am not my thoughts. I don't need to jump up and start driving."
- **Busy mind:** Use the objectifying method and write down the list of things to do before you start meditating to free up your mind. You may also try for a moment to see yourself and your frenzy from the point of view of the soul.
- **Negative mind:** Observe your mind without judging. Shed the light of awareness on your drama. In addition, before you begin meditating, you can make a list of the 10 most important dramas in your life. Now imagine the worst to the best outcomes for each instance. Make a note of it.
- **Turmoil of emotions:** You can use the breath. Put your hands on your abdomen and breathe in and out deeply. This method can also be applied to the heart. You can use the Chi Gong abdominal breath—quick in and out breaths through the nostrils for 10 seconds, ending with 5 abdominal breaths, moving energy up the etheric spine and down in front. At the end the breath is coming to rest in the abdomen.

*Author's Note:* Please note the intentional use of the Universal Masculine throughout this document to preserve the integrity of the language used in the teachings of Alice A. Bailey and the Spiritual Studies Institute. In addition, while meditating using the process of the CLM, we are working on energetic levels. These levels express relative polarities of positive-masculine, feminine-negative, and neutral respectively. The Universal Masculine applies here to Soul energy in relation to the mental, emotional, and etheric/physical aspects of the individual.

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