

## **Br. Martin – “Introspection”**

**June 5, 2011 – Lake Shrine Temple**

Meditation is not stopping doing - it's stopping “you-ing!” It's a break from ourselves. It relieves us of the ego burden. Relax to the breath and you will relax into the God-intelligence. That's the true “me.”

If you're new to meditation and you don't know a technique to use while meditating do “reveal thyself” in the spiritual eye.

First statement of the Gita has to do with introspection. Master would ask monastics to introspect at the end of the day.

It's fascinating how bad we are about introspection. People learn by being humble. If you think you already have the ability, you'll cut yourself off from learning. We often have the wrong ideas about ourselves, but we have to try to introspect.

Br. Martin tells the story of how one week a minister gave a talk about stealing. He asked everyone who stole to raise their hands. The next week he gave a service on lying and told the congregation this lecture is for those of you who didn't raise your hands last week!

Br. Martin wrote an article on introspection for a past issue of SRF magazine (but he didn't say which edition!) He said that most people do not plan, introspect, or have written goals, but if you introspect for one year, you will change.

Only 3% of Harvard people have written goals and they make a lot more money than the other 97%! So if you want to be successful make a plan, a written plan.

First thought in the morning should be on God.

Don't judge yourself with introspection because you'll go backwards. Progress is not linear. Our progress is like a slinky—we think we're going around in circles, but we're actually gradually going up.

Br. Martin did an introspection chart for months to help him think of God first.

Our pets don't introspect. That's why we love them. That's why Br. Martin loved his cat Spanky—she didn't introspect herself into the ground.

If we don't choose to make a decision and hold the reins, the choice will be made for us by the worst part of the brain. Neurons fire – the readiness impulse – samskaras – the karmic seed that makes us do an action. Why does the conscious mind do this? It's the job of the ego to make us feel we are in control of ourselves. That we are the doers. But we're not. God is the doer.

There is free will. Even though impulses fire, there is a window of time – Master calls it “won't power” – where we can make a choice and choose our reaction or action.

Responsibility – the ability to choose your response.

There is a little window to choose before the chemicals in the brain take over.

Every good action burns sugar/glucose in the brain. Being good is exhausting!

Know who you are and what you want out of life.

What do you want? Who are you? Ask your friends. Your friends will know.

We need to look inside to see what we really want. Look how others react to you. Pick up the clues from other people. We have to pick up hints to who we are. It's difficult to see reality.

Techniques for Introspection:

1. Ask God to give you understanding. Combine this with exercise – like walking. Have a pep talk with Master. Introspection is not a free gift. You have to work for it and if you work for it you will have the gift of understanding yourself.
2. We're sick with feelings and that's why we have problems. We are the problem. Love God and meditate. You will understand your problems when the time is right.
3. Understand yourself through doing the right thing.
4. Take ownership of the change process. If you need to create introspection charts and be scientific, then do it. Write down what you do in a journal. (For example, Charles Lindbergh used charts while his wife used journals.)
5. We have incredible suffering in our lives, but we have to recognize that we are heroes. Introspect and give it to God.

You are immortal and are made in the image of God. No matter your faults, God will take you home and cleanse you.