

## Mastering the Techniques of Meditation Part 1 Hong Sau

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(Reminder: These notes are our best attempt to capture the essence of what was said at this class. There is always a degree of human error involved when taking notes and we have transcribed them to the best of our ability. Discussion on how to do the techniques has been omitted, based on SRF policy but is in the SRF Lessons.)

Guruji compared our minds to a lake. Just as the lake ripples can disturb the surface, so our thoughts can disturb our peace in meditation. When I was a child, we had a ten foot wooden boat. We would go out to where the lake was about twelve feet deep and would try to seek the bottom of the lake. If the wind was blowing, there would be ripples across the lake and we couldn't see the bottom. But on some days, it was so calm that when the ripples camp we could see everything on the bottom of the lake clearly, the moss, the logs, even the oxygen bubbles coming off of the logs.

Master said, "As soon as you take away the ripples of sensation from the mind, God's heavenly bliss emerges as peace. A changeable mind perceives a changeable creation, and is easily disturbed; the unchangeable soul and the unruffled mind, on the other hand, behold, behind the masks of change, the Eternal Spirit. The man whose mind is like an oscillating mirror beholds all creation as distorted into waves of change; but the man who holds his mental mirror steady beholds there naught but the reflections of the Sole Unity—God. Through realization, not mere imagination, he sees that his body and all things are the condensed consciousness of Spirit. The mind, free of artificial excitation, remains centered in its native state of inner peace and soul joy. "

Pantanjali said that in meditation we experience alternate waves of thoughts and feelings. When these waves are neutralized, the yogi resides in Hi Self, the Soul. Meditation is concentration used to know God. In meditation, we don't let the mind wander around and think different things. We focus on the one beam of light with our attention, and the body is relaxed and like the sun's rays. Meditation is that special form of concentration where we don't want to think.

Master said,:

"You may shut the mouth of the bear and the tiger;

Ride the lion and play with the cobra;

By alchemy you may learn your livelihood;

You may wander through the universe incognito;

Make vassals of the gods; be ever youthful;

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You may walk in water and live in fire;

But control of the mind is better and more difficult."

In "God Talks with Arjuna, Chapter 6 verse 43, Arjuna says to Krishna, "I consider the mind to be as difficult to master as the wind." We're all in the same situation. It isn't easy. We have to learn the techniques and learn to focus the mind and really concentrate on our relationship with God. If the mind runs away, we bring it gently back. "

The Gita predicted this trouble in Chapters 12-13 and 14. It is talking about the war of Kurushetra, indicating that maya does not want us to self-realize, even when the mind is still. Then, Guruji says, "Ego blows the conch shell of breath." And when our breathing gets restless, everything else chimes in. The blood starts moving. In the next verse. We find that if we continue our meditation, guruji has given us a whole quiver of arrows, techniques. The devotee will be aided if he realizes these. If he forces the breath, the body will get tense. Keep the mind calm by practicing the right techniques and by keeping good company. If we keep on, then in an instant, if we keep on, Krishna and Arjuna will blow their conch shells. These are the beautiful astral sounds.

Brother Bhaktananda told us to treat the mind like a dog. " Tell it to sit. Stay. Remind yourself, "I am the soul, and I am in control, and I am going to tell you to concentrate. Master said , " I used to sit for hours trying to control the body and the thoughts. But between the restless thoughts and God, there is a wall. However, when the mind is still, we are in the kingdom of the Infinite. "

Master said, "When I am in the Infinite, my whole mind melts in the bliss of God." Guruji had a younger brother. Mukunda would come home with friends, and his brother would hear them talking about Samadhi.

"Can I see you in it?" he inquired.

Master declined, and finally said, "Come to my room at midnight. He put a mat on the floor for his younger brother, and then explained, "Samadhi is withdrawing the mind from the body and merging it with God through a method of concentration."

He mentioned Hong Sau and Om but not kriya. The mind becomes fully absorbed in the sound coming from the heart chakra that he hears in the om technique. This inner awareness and body awareness of God is yoga. And then Master went into Samadhi.

Some people think that they have to have kriya first, but you can get there with Om and Hong Sau. With Hong Sau, when the mind is told to follow the breath, the body relaxes and there is less carbon being burned up. Everything can slow down and relax. Because we are doing the technique, we are conscious so the five senses are turned off. Brother Turiyananda asked Ma why it is so hard for people to practice Hong Sau.

She responded, "Where are their minds during the day? If we are anxious during the day, we replay our anxiety when we meditate. When during the day, we practice the presence throughout, then our

consciousness and feeling are connected with God all day. Try to keep them regularly connected with God so that we can say, "Now I have the chance to focus on the Divine. It feels so close because you've been with the Divine all day.

The position for meditation includes having the eyes lifted up throughout meditation. But when you do the techniques, the attention is on the techniques. Perform that aspect of the technique.

How many of you have harmoniums? (A scattering of hands were raised throughout the audience.)

Chanting is half the battle. You don't need to know a lot about music. Demonstrating with the harmonium, Brother showed how to play "Opal Frame" line "Baptize me in Thy light" with four white notes. Come home after work and just play those four notes and let them wash over you. Then, hold one note down and play the notes with a drone.

We try many ways to find God, but God will allude us until we find a way to pour our love out from our hearts.

Brother then demonstrated the Hong Sau technique. He noted that the Sanskrit words mean, "I am He". Brother said, "Wow!" Doesn't that release a lot of burdens. I am God. I am He. So the meaning is wonderfully relaxing just in itself. The reaction to the incoming and outgoing breath is just wonderful!

With Hong Sau, we don't control the breath at all. If it wants to go fast, that's fine. We're not trying to make anything happen. When we do it, we concentrate on the chant, the breath, and the feeling of peace that comes. Sometimes people say they don't have time to do Hong Sau. It's better to do just a tiny bit rather than skipping it. Then it keeps us in the habit and we remember to do it. We only need to concentrate on one Hong Sau at a time.

A young man and an older man were taking a canoe trip of 100 miles. The younger man said, "You mean we have to travel 100 miles. The old timer responded, "The only mile is the next mile. Brother continued discussing the technique.

It's important how we end our meditation. The purpose of the techniques is to let us feel calm. They are preparing us for communion. This is the time of great stillness and also a time for love and devotion. Brother Anandamoy advised, "Don't let the mind go away. Hook the mind to a thought like, 'Reveal Thyself!'"

Daya Ma told the monks to take an affirmation to our rooms. "I Love you Lord. " When I was young, I wasn't sure if I really loved him. Then I thought, "If I'm a soul, then the soul will love God. And I said, 'I the soul, love you.'" Then the feeling in the room changed, and I thought, "Maybe I do", and then I could say, "I love you, Lord".

When I was in Calcutta, I had work in the morning and I had to take an early bus. I only had time for the techniques. Then, two miracles occurred. The first time I took the bus, there was only one passenger on

the bus. I put my chuddar back against the corner. I was just doing the devotional part. The glass windows were rattling, and I lost all awareness of the bus. Suddenly, I found myself in the air. I was levitating. People didn't like the bus going so fast, so they had put up speed bumps. The driver hit a speed bump. The back wheels acted like a lever and threw me up into the air. The driver realized he had hit a bump, and slowed the bus down, and I kept moving at the same speed the bus had been going and came down on the back of the metal seats in front of me.

When we are talking about spirituality and our sadhana , we are talking about developing a personal relationship with God. Guruji said that when he looked at the spiritual eye, everything stopped. After deep devotional calls, the spirit falls on the devotee. He writes:

“You can hid behind the ocean,

You can hid behind delusion,

You can hide behind life.

You can hide behind dualities

You can hide behind theological conundrums,

You can hide behind my prayers,

But you cannot hide behind My love,

For in the mirroring light of my love,

You are revealed.”

Even if our meditation needs to be short, these can be the most memorable times in our lives, when we curl upon the lap of Divine Mother. In meditation, in private, you may be bathed and saturated in the love of God. Master said, “No matter what happens, at all times in death and life we are on the lap of Divine Mother. Life is waking on Her lap, and death is sleeping on Her lap. So you see we can never part, for in life and death through eternity we will be waking or sleeping on Her ever living bosom.”

May we now remember those who couldn't be here, and send love to them as we have been specially trained by guruji to do.

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