

Brief Excerpt from *Discourses by Meher Baba, Part 1*

Meditation is deep and constant concentration upon an ideal object. In such concentration upon an ideal object, the person is conscious only of the object of meditation, completely forgetting the mind as well as the body. Thus no new sanskaras are formed and old ones are dispersed and exhausted through the mental activity of dwelling on the object of concentration....

Those who have vivid and lively imaginations can try intensive concentration on some point, but fixing the mind on some point should be avoided by those who have no liking for it. Ordinarily, the energy of the mind is scattered, through its diverse thoughts. Meditation on a point is very salutary for the mind to gather itself and settle down, but it is a mechanical process and therefore lacks creative and blissful experiences. However, in the initial stages, this form of meditation might be used as a preparation for other more successful forms of meditation.

The more successful and deeper forms of meditation are preceded by deliberate and constructive thinking about God, the Beloved. Meditation on God is spiritually most fruitful. God can become the object of meditation either in His *impersonal* aspect or in His *personal* aspect. Meditation on the impersonal aspect of God is suitable only for those who have a special aptitude for it. It consists in focusing all thoughts on the abstract and unmanifest existence of God. On the other hand, meditation on the personal aspect of God consists in centering all thoughts upon the form and attributes of God.

After intensive meditation the mind might want to settle down not on the object of meditation, but on the steadiness of the expansive peace experienced during meditation. Such moments are the natural result of the fatigue of the faculty of imagination, and they should be

effortlessly encouraged. Meditation should be spontaneous and not forced. In the moments of the surging up of divine impulses, imaginations should be let loose and allowed to soar. The flight of imagination should be controlled only by the set purpose of becoming one with the Infinite. It should not be influenced by the currents of the diverse feelings of lust, greed, or anger....

Solitude is one of the essential conditions for attaining success in meditation. In the world of thought there is a constant intermingling of thought forms and colors. Some mighty ideas tend to strengthen the mind by facilitating integration; whereas some frivolous thoughts are dissipating.... Solitude means economy of mental energy and increased power of concentration. Having nothing extraneous to attract or repel the mind, you are drawn inward and learn the art of opening yourself to the higher currents, which have the potency of giving you strength, bliss, and peaceful expansiveness. While meditation on the personal and impersonal aspects of God requires withdrawal of consciousness into the sanctuary of one's own heart, concentration on the universal aspect of God is best achieved through selfless service for humanity....

Selfless service is ... one of the best methods of diverting and sublimating the energy locked up in the binding sanskaras. Selfless service is accomplished when there is not the slightest thought of reward or result, and when there is complete disregard of one's own comfort or convenience or the possibility of being misunderstood. When you are wholly occupied with the welfare of others, you can hardly think of yourself. You are not concerned with your comfort and convenience or your health and happiness....

When love is deep and intense, it is called *bhakti*, or devotion.... Para-bhakti is not merely intensified bhakti. It begins where bhakti ends. At the stage of para-bhakti, devotion is not only singleminded but is accompanied by extreme restlessness of the heart and a ceaseless longing to unite with the Beloved. This is followed by lack

of interest in one's own body and its care, isolation from one's own surroundings, and utter disregard for appearances or criticism- while the divine impulses of attraction to the Beloved become more frequent than ever. This highest phase of love is most fruitful because it has as its object the One who is love incarnate and who can, as the supreme Beloved, respond to the lover most completely. The purity, sweetness, and efficacy of the love that the lover receives from the Master contributes to the insuperable spiritual value of this highest phase of love.