



## Session 2: The Mature Mind



*"The unexamined life is not worth living".*

- *Socrates*

There are entrained thinking habits that can disturb the mind and distort our thinking. These habits have the capacity to attach us to the world of objects and potentially rob us from our capacity to enjoy the present moment as it is. These mental habits can be summarised as our "likes and dislikes", or to put it even more briefly, stress.

### **The Six Enemies of Mind**

When our mind is undisciplined, these like and dislikes can culminate in the form of six inner 'enemies': *desire, anger, greed, delusion (or lack of discrimination), pride and jealousy*.

Whenever there is something we *desire* strongly or have an attachment to, there is the potential for *anger*. Anger is a thwarted desire. When I am presented with an obstruction to the fulfilment of my desire, I experience *anger*. If instead my desire gets fulfilled, it creates a different problem: my mind craves for more. I experience *greed*. Thus desire gives rise to either anger or greed. Anger and greed, in turn, rob me of my sense of clear thinking and discrimination, causing me to make wrong choices. We can call this lack of discrimination *delusion*. When I am successful, there is a danger I can become *proud* and arrogant. A proud person seeks security in his or her own achievements. When I come across someone whom I perceive as more successful in one way in comparison to me, for instance, they have more money or a higher status position; I immediately compare myself to him or her. This comparison causes *jealousy* in me.

These six tendencies are called enemies because they produce emotional distress and suffering. Assuming our goal is to be more peaceful, it is important to strive to be free of these negative emotional tendencies.



## The Pillars of A Mature Mind - Qualifications

### 1. Mastery of Mind

Mastery of mind means a calm, peaceful and an abiding mind. We find ourselves pulled by the current of our likes and dislikes – our attachments and aversions – and the mind becomes easily distracted. When this happens the goal of true peace is elusive because our like and dislikes destroy our natural inner poise. Only a mind that sees things neither as less nor more than what they are is free of the pull of likes and dislikes, and capable of composure. This means discovering an orientation of objectivity.

***\*Practice tip:** By seeing the limitation or faults in the objects to which the mind has strayed, we can attain mastery. If you have an excessively positive view of an object that leads to attachment, consider the downside and limitations of that object. If you have an excessively negative view of an object or experience, try to consider it's upside.*

### 2. Mastery of the Senses

All 5 of the sense organs i.e. eyes, ears, nose, skin and the tongue, have a propensity to 'hook' us to certain objects. For example, the tongue can have craving for sweet tastes. The habitual craving of these sense organs causes us to be swept away with sense pleasures, like a powerful wind that diverts a boat away from its path. Such unrestrained indulgence can divert our minds away from an appreciation of the beauty of the present moment. Restraining the sense organs does not mean depriving, repressing or suppressing them, as this produces guilt and over indulgence. However, we need not be slaves to our senses either. Only when our sense organs distract us, should we practice standing up to them and saying 'no' from time to time. This practice helps us to focus on living life according to our highest values, rather than becoming sidelined by distractions.

***\*Practice tip:***

*Tortoises pull their four limbs and head into their shell at will. Likewise, the wise person can withdraw their active organs at will. For example, practice restraint of the tongue, which has two primary functions: speech and taste.*

*At the level of speech, there are three criteria:*

- 1. My words are non harmful*
- 2. My words are truthful*

### *3. My speech is pleasant and useful*

*At the level of taste, I can practice not eating out of force of habit, or to please my palate, in the expense of my health. I can practice eating what is required, neither too much nor too little.*



#### **Squatters In The Mind**

Imagine you buy a winning lottery ticket and are lucky enough to secure an enormous windfall. What would you do with the money? Well, suppose you decide to use some of the winnings to buy a beautiful plot of land near a forest, overlooking a serene lake in quiet and tranquil location. You decide to build your dream house on the plot of land. One day, just as the house is almost complete and you're brimming with anticipation, you drive to the local town to pick up some supplies. Upon your return, to your shock and horror you find a squatter has taken residence in your dream home. Reeling with anger, you drive back into town to seek legal advice, but upon your return you find the squatters are now three. Each time you leave and return they multiple, from three, to six, to twelve. You realise you have no control! You're dream home has now become overrun with strangers who threaten your sense of peace and security!

In a similar way, if our thoughts continue to go unchecked and unrestrained, then a multitude of thoughts can take 'squatters rights' in our mind. The average human being experiences an average of 60, 000 thoughts per day, 90% of which are repetitive, recycled thoughts that leave little room for creative, spontaneous insight. These 'squatters' can become powerful and supplant our ability to think in a clear and coherent way.

To return to the story, imagine you could exchange those squatters for people of your choosing, like your most cherished family and friends. Wouldn't that improve your situation?

Mantra meditation gives us the capacity to develop mental discipline so that we can at least choose which thoughts to take seriously, and which one's to ignore. We can clear the mental squatters inhabiting our minds and choose to install intelligent, loving thoughts that lead us to make wise choices.

## **WHAT IS MANTRA MEDITATION?**

The word mantra comes from man, “the mind” and tri, “to cross”. It can be interpreted as “to cross the mind”. It is like a rowing boat that can help us cross the ocean of suffering, and arrive at the pristine lake of inner peace. Mantra’s have shown to be beneficial for curbing rumination, obsessive thinking and has even offered to war veterans to reduce symptoms associated with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Mantra meditation is used to develop single pointed focus of attention, and for us to slow down the thinking process to enable a sense of inner spaciousness.

## **BENEFITS OF MANTRA MEDITATION**

There are several benefits to mantra meditation but chief among them are two-fold:

1. As a ‘rapid focus tool’: Like using a magnifying glass to focus sunlight to burn a leaf, the mantra can burn mental noise and cultivate a razor-sharp mental focus. With mental focus comes greater clarity.
2. As ‘formula for transformation’ for helping us to connect with a higher aspect of ourselves or even greater sense of being in harmony with our environment and other people around us.

There are a number of additional benefits also. The mantra is portable, immediate, inexpensive, invisible, and non-toxic. In fact, mantra meditation can interrupt negative, automatic thoughts and provide us with a greater sense of mastery over our minds. Continued mantra practice can ‘charge our minds’ and thus be ‘cashed in’ in times of increased stress and chaos. It can be used ‘on the job’, in busy stressful environments such as hospitals. It can be picked up and dropped at a moments notice, as required. Mantra meditation can offset the hurry sickness that is a product of the fast-past life many of us lead. It can aid in helping us slow down and appreciate each moment as it comes. It can help us develop greater compassion for others, meaning the ability to be sensitive to others pain, and to have the appropriate to help alleviate their suffering. To this end, it can also help us develop our internal ‘pleased self’.

## **Guided Meditation: Mantra Meditation**

### **FIRST BALANCE YOUR BREATH**

Pay attention to the sensation of air moving in and out of your nostrils. Tune in to your breath as it comes in and out of your nostrils. Notice if one nostril feels blocked or obstructed, and focus on breathing gently into the blocked nostril until it gradually opens up. The aim is to maintain an even, flowing breath between both nostrils. When the mind captures your attention, observe and notice and place the focus of your attention back on the breath.

### **REPEATING THE MANTRA**

Now, as you inhale silently and slowly repeat the first half of the mantra in your mind (e.g. 'I...')...and as you exhale silently and slowly intone the second half of the mantra (e.g. 'am...').....now both part of the mantra together (e.g. I.....AM)....and as you repeat the mantra in the mind, reflect on the obvious sense of your own existence and connect with the meaning of the mantra. Over time, see if it is possible to leave slightly longer gaps between repetitions and notice the silence between the thoughts. Recognise you are simply here....whole and complete.

## Common Mantras

<b>Mantras</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b><i>Buddhism</i></b>	
Om Mane Padme Hum (Ohm mah-nee pod-may-hume)	An invocation to Lord Avalokitesvara, the lotus jewel of wisdom and compassion
Namo Butsaya (Nah0mo boot-sie-yah)	I bow to the Buddha
“Namo Omito-Fo” or “Namo Amitufo”	Infinite light, infinite life, infinite wisdom
<b><i>Japanese (zen)</i></b>	
Namu Amida Butsu	Infinite light, infinite life, infinite wisdom
<b><i>Christian</i></b>	
My God and My All	St. Francis of Assisi’s mantra
Maranatha (Mar-uh0naw-tha)	Lord of the Heart (Aramaic)
Kyrie Eleison (Kir-ee-ay Ee-lay-ee-sone)	Lord have mercy or the Lord is risen
Christe Eleison (Kreest-ay Ee-lay-ee-sone)	Christ have mercy, Christ has risen
Jesus, Jesus or Lord Jesus Christ	Jesus Christ
Hail Mary or Ave Maria	Mary mother of Jesus
<b><i>Hindu / Indian</i></b>	
Rama (Rah-mah)	Eternal joy within
Om Namah Shivaya (Ohm Nay-mah Shee-vy-yah)	An invocation to Shiva, Lord of wisdom, beauty and fearlessness, “the auspicious one”
Om Gam Ganapataye Namaha	An invocation to Ganesha, the remover of obstacles
Om namo Narayanaya	An invocation to Lord Vishnu, the one who pervades everything
Om Ishaya Namah	An invocation to Ishwara, the all pervasive wisdom
Om Prema (Ohm Pray-Mah)	A call for universal love
Om Shanti (Ohm Shawn-tee)	An invocation to eternal peace
So Hum (So hum)	I am that self within

<b><i>Jewish</i></b>	
Barukh Atah Adonoi (Bah-ruke Ah-tah Ah-don-aye)	Blessed are Thou O Lord
Ribono Shel Olam (Ree-boh-noh Shel Oh-lahm)	Lord of the Universe
Shalom	Peace
Sheheena (Sha Hee-nah)	Feminine aspect of God
<b><i>Muslim</i></b>	
Allah Bismallah Ir-rahman Ir-rahim (Beese-mah-lah ir-rahmun ir-rah-heem)	In the name of Allah, the merciful, the compassionate
<b><i>Native American</i></b>	
O Wakan Tanka	Oh, Great Spirit
<b><i>Secular Mantras</i></b>	
Oh, Great Sun	Invocation to the all pervasive, intelligent 'light' of all
Universal Order / Intelligent Order / Collective Power	Invocation to the universal, all pervasive intelligence
Intelligent Nature (or Natural Intelligence or Natural Order)	Invocation to the intelligent natural orders that govern the universe

## **The Four Levels of Discipline**

Disciplining ourselves is like building a damn across a river. The purpose of damming a river is to conserve water, which would have otherwise wastefully entered the sea, and to use it for other constructive purposes like irrigation and electricity generation.

Likewise, humans have a lot of power or energy inside that we tend to waste through meaningless activities. We are all endowed with the power to desire, the power to know, and the power to act. Every great thing that has happened in the world is because of these three powers. If I learn to conserve these powers, I can channel them into constructive purposes. The four types of disciplines can help us to conserve these powers and harness our vast potential.

The four disciplines are:

### **1. Physical Discipline**

Includes a well-balanced diet, physical exercise, and adequate activity moderated by periods of rest. Managing our physical health well is a foundation for attaining and enjoying most of our goals in life, including inner peace. Take someone who has a highflying career, works 18 hours a day, travels all over the world and never stops. They are likely only to value their physical health when they lose it.

### **2. Verbal Discipline**

In verbal discipline we observe and adjust both the quality and quantity of our speech. It is best to speak only what is truthful, non-hurtful, useful and pleasing.

#### ❖ Speech Quantity Control:

- Resist getting into arguments with others
- Resist gossiping about others
- Resist frivolous talk
- Resist excessive talk about the past or the future

#### ❖ Speech Quality Control:

- Speak less
- Plan your speech
- Don't speak when emotionally disturbed
- Pay attention to the impact of your words

### **3. Sensory Discipline**



To avoid unhealthy objects and avoid excess of healthy objects is sensory discipline. This is accomplished by living an alert life, and monitoring the 'post digestive effects' of the objects we imbibe.

#### 4. **Mental Discipline**

Only when we have disciplined ourselves at the level of the physical, verbal and sensory, are we prepared to achieve mental discipline. Since the mind is an instrument, we can train it through meditation.



### **Two Treasures of Mind - Values**

#### **1. Inner and outer purity**

External purity is fairly obvious and involves ensuring that your immediate environment is clean and tidy. This includes a clean body, clean clothes, clean workspace and clean dwelling. The discipline involved in maintaining a healthy outer environment helps to cultivate a mind that is composed, alert and attentive.

Inner purity is the other aspect of this value. During an average day it is normal for layers of emotional 'dust' to settle on the mind. Feelings like guilt, pride, possessiveness, fear or jealousy can slowly gather to toxic levels and pollute the purity of our minds. The 'detergent' for these feelings is a practice known as "applying the opposite thought" or cognitive restructuring and can be used to challenge any pattern of negative thinking.

**\*Practice tip:** Pick a person who recently evoked a difficult emotion (e.g. jealousy, anger, guilt) and list the main emotion(s) that they triggered within you. Now, take a pen and paper and try to make a list of their positive qualities, whilst being as objective as possible. Then, close your eyes and try to visualise this person within their own space, happy, displaying these positive attributes. Notice any impact this has on how you feel about the person.

**\*Practice tip:** When feeling emotional, complete the following 5-step formula for emotional freedom:

1. What is the strongest emotion?
2. How intense is this emotion (1-10)?
3. What is the 'hot thought' underneath this emotion?
4. What is a rational perspective? i.e. what would I say to a friend?
5. What might I do differently from now on?



## Mindfulness Practice

1. Practice the Mantra Meditation for at least 10 minutes twice a day
2. Make a resolution to complete 1-3 *practice tips* to try out this week, and record the results
3. Create 'islands of mindfulness' throughout your day using the breath and mantra meditations

### Poem: The Guest House

This being human is a guest house. Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness, some momentary awareness comes as an unexpected visitor. Welcome and entertain them all!

Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,  
who violently sweep your house  
empty of its furniture, still,  
treat each guest honorably.

He may be clearing you out for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice, meet them at the door laughing,  
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes, because each has been sent as a guide from beyond.

By Rumi