

## Basic anthroposophical meditation exercises

The exercises described here come from Rudolf Steiner. You need 10 to 15 minutes of absolutely undisturbed time for each exercise. Ideally, one of the exercises should be done in the morning and one in the evening. You should be concentrated and awake. It makes no sense to practise if you are (still or already) very tired. A seated, upright posture (which supports alertness) is recommended.

The beginning and end of the exercise should be clearly defined internally. For example, you can imagine that at the beginning you enter the inner mediation space through a "gate of devotion (or reverence) for what you are experiencing" and at the end of the exercise you leave through a "gate of gratitude for what you have experienced". The meditation mood should not be mixed with the everyday mood of consciousness.

Try to stay as focused as possible during the exercise. If you digress, simply return to the content of the meditation. It is not the length of the exercise that matters, but the intensity of the concentration and the depth of the experience.

### 1. Exercise: Letting nature impressions resonate - an insight-oriented meditation to deepen the experience and recognition of nature

In his book "How to gain knowledge of the higher worlds", Rudolf Steiner described these exercises as follows:

"The [spiritual disciple] is instructed to create moments in his life in which he immerses himself in himself in silence and solitude. But he should not devote himself to the affairs of his own self in such moments. That would have the opposite effect of what is intended. **Rather, in such moments, he should let what he has experienced, what the outer world has told him, resonate in silence.** Every flower, every animal, every action will reveal unsuspected secrets to him in such quiet moments. And he will be prepared to see new impressions of the outside world with completely different eyes than before. He who only wants to *enjoy* impression after impression dulls his cognitive faculty. He who, after the enjoyment, allows something to be *revealed to* him by the enjoyment, cultivates and educates his cognitive faculty. He must only accustom himself not merely to allow the pleasure to linger, but, renouncing further enjoyment, to *process* what he has enjoyed through inner activity."

Concrete guidance:

Remember an impression of nature. It can be a plant, one or more animals, a landscape, an atmospheric mood, sunrise or sunset, a starry sky, etc. Please recreate this impression as vividly and realistically as possible in your imagination ("place it in front of your mind"). Then dwell on this impression for a while. You can "eavesdrop" on it, i.e. let it "speak" to you. If you repeat it, you can meditate on the same or a different impression of nature.

Such impressions of nature can gain particular intensity if you meditate on them in a mood of reverence.

### 2. Exercise: Mediation of a chant or mantra - a meditation to awaken mental and spiritual experiences

Preparation, implementation and follow-up as described above.

In this meditation, go through the individual lines or content of the saying one after the other. In each case, pay attention to

- the experience of your own physicality (top, middle, bottom, outside, inside, etc.)<sup>1</sup>
- Movements e x p e r i e n c e d through the meditation content; nature and direction of such movements,
- possible color or light impressions,
- the possible condensation of the content into an image that you can hold in front of your mind for a while.

You can choose one of the following mantras by Rudolf Steiner - or another one - according to your personal preference. You should then stay with this one mantra for a longer period of time.

<b>I.</b>	<b>II.</b>	<b>III.</b>
More radiant than the sun	I feel light around me,	In the heart weaves feeling,
Purer than the snow	it is world-light;	In the head shines thinking,
Finer than the ether	Light I feel within me,	In the limbs lives willing.
Is the self,	It is human light;	Weaving shining,
The spirit in my heart.	And I will receive	Strengthful weaving,
This self am I.	Human light as world-light,	Shining strength:
I am this self.	World-light as human light.	This is Man.

Again, it is not the length but the depth of the meditation that matters. Afterwards, please make a note of the content, duration and intensity of the meditation and the impressions and thoughts you experienced.

### 3. Exercise: Looking at yourself as if you were a complete stranger - an exercise to awaken the mental observer and develop your own personality

Preparation, execution and follow-up as described above. *If possible, this exercise should be carried out daily.* You can choose a situation from the previous day or from a longer period of time.

In his book "How to gain knowledge of the higher worlds", Rudolf Steiner described these exercises as follows:

"During this time, people should completely tear themselves away from their everyday lives. His thoughts and emotions should take on a different color than they usually do. **He should let his joys, his sufferings, his sorrows, his experiences, his deeds pass before his soul. And he should position himself in such a way that he sees everything that he otherwise experiences from a higher point of view.** Just think of how, in ordinary life, you look at something that someone else has experienced or done quite differently from what you have experienced or done yourself. It cannot be any different. For one is interwoven with what one experiences or does oneself; one only *observes* the experience or deed of another. **What you have to strive for in the separated moments is to look at your own experiences and deeds, to judge them as if you had not experienced or done them yourself, but as if someone else had.** Imagine for a moment that someone has experienced a severe stroke of fate. How different is his attitude to this than to a completely similar stroke of fate suffered by his fellow human being? No one can consider this to be unjustified. It is part of human nature. And it is similar to such extraordinary cases in the everyday affairs of life. **The [spiritual disciple] must seek the strength to face himself like a stranger at certain times. He must face himself with the inner calmness of the assessor.** If you achieve this, your own experiences will show themselves to you in a new light. As long as you are interwoven in them, as long as you stand in them, you are just as connected with the insignificant as with the essential. When you reach the *inner peace* of the overview, the essentials are separated from the non-essentials. Sorrow and joy, every thought, every decision appear different when you face yourself in this way. - It is as if you have spent the whole day in one place and have noticed the smallest things.

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<sup>1</sup> It is also possible to focus the experience not on the immediate surroundings of one's own body, but on the cosmic expanse.

as close as the largest; then, in the evening, climbing a neighboring hill and looking over the whole place at once. Then the parts of this place appear in other mutual relations than when one is in it. This will not and need not succeed with presently experienced destinies; with longer past ones it must be striven for by the student of spiritual life. - The value of such inner, calm introspection depends much less on *what* one sees in the process than on finding the *strength* within oneself to develop such inner calm. ...

In some situations in life, it certainly takes a great deal of strength to create moments of inner peace. But the greater the necessary strength, the more significant is what is achieved. With regard to secret discipleship, everything depends on **being able to face oneself energetically, with inner truth and unreserved sincerity, with all one's actions and deeds, as a complete stranger.**"

Concrete guidance:

Please imagine a situation from the past day - or even a situation from a long time ago. Try to really see yourself in this situation from the outside like a stranger (although you can look into your feelings and thoughts). (It can be helpful if you even give yourself a different name and say what you observe internally. Speak about yourself in the third person). The image of the situation should be as concrete and vivid as possible. Try to look at yourself calmly and truthfully ("unreservedly", as Rudolf Steiner wrote) and also assess yourself.

**Caution:** If you tend to judge yourself negatively, you should never reinforce this behavior by doing the exercises! That would be absolutely counterproductive. Instead, try to observe how you judge yourself negatively and what effect this has on you and those around you.

After some time of inner contemplation, you change to the "gaze of your angel". It sees and knows everything about you in complete sobriety, but also in love. Ask the angel how you could have behaved "correctly", i.e. constructively, in the situation you are looking at.

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