



August 2023 Graduate Program Lesson

Exploring Lesson 1– The End Point of Meditation

Introduction

In some ways, meditation is an endlessly ongoing deepening. It is a love affair with Reality. Viewed from a different perspective, meditation certainly has a beginning, middle stage and an end. Like many things in our awakening journey, we learn to live with the paradox of it. Later, we learn to love the paradox of it.

In Lesson one of the Dissolving the Ego Course we learn how to tune into what is already here, the Noumenon by whichever doorway or name we are calling it. The meditation we learn in lesson one is fundamental to our awakening. What we are really learning is how nice it feels to allow attention to rest on the No-thing-ness that the Noumenon is. It costs us a lot of energy to keep our attention and focus narrowed down to think about one object when our natural state is to have our attention open and not focused on any particular thing. Focusing in on one object makes the mind think about that object (and all other objects) and to do that we have to exclude everything else in existence! No wonder it is called “paying attention” then when it diminishes over 99% of what we can experience in this moment.

It is quite an evolutionary leap for us when we realise that our attention does not have to follow the objects of perception seen and experienced by our senses. We can see someone with our eyes and not have our attention contract around the image and begin to think about them. Our attention can remain open, wide and focused on the Awareness or Contextual Field. We must come to see that our attention has two modes of focusing and we have only really been using one of them. Attention can either be “zoomed out” and aware of the Noumenon or “zoomed in” and aware of an object. It cannot do both at the same time. Zooming in to focus on objects is the cause of suffering. When we are zoomed in it costs us a lot of energy and it stimulates the mind to think about, desire, remember and anticipate. The moment we begin to think about one object, we will imagine

an infinite number of them and our mind is lost in endless thinking. No object really exists independent of anything else or the Noumenon. Each object depends on the Noumenon to exist.

We have been allowing to jump from object to object and to interrupt our focus on the Noumenon because we have not known any other way. In this month's study (and if it feels right for you) we are going to look at how to help maintain focus on the Noumenon. "Concentration" on the Noumenon is another word for meditation but it does not mean intense effort, more like intense focus. Intense focus or concentration on the Noumenon is going to disempower the thoughts stream and make it easier to keep attention on the Noumenon. The more interested we are in the Self, the less interested we are in thinking about things. We cannot do both at once.

Concentration is the same as deep curiosity and focus or interest. It is being absorbed by and in the Noumenon. It is paying attention to the Self as if it is the most important thing you will ever encounter (because it is and it is the only thing that exists). It is not an efforting.

As you practice this you will find your attention stays on the Self more often and you begin to get a heads up when it is about to move. As you concentrate on the Noumenon you will find that life force is building up much more in the body because it is not being spent on thinking, which is haemorrhaging energy. We are thinking about things that do not exist!

As this process continues, you will begin to notice the desire or urge to think, the energy of thoughts, before they actually form into something that pulls our attention and you can simply remain in your meditation/concentration on the Noumenon. The more we turn away from the urge to think, the more silent the mind will be. Over time and with practice you will be able to maintain focus in this zoomed out way as you sit in meditation and then throughout your day.

Let's take 3 examples of how this super focus or concentration may occur:

1-Listening to the Silence. Normally we listen to Silence, then get distracted listening to thoughts and so on. When you listen to the Silence, can you REALLY listen? Can you listen as if someone across the room was about to whisper something really important? What if the room was filled with other beings, talking etc, would you really listen intently or intensely? Can you listen like you wanted to hear a pin drop on the floor? This is the intensity of focus but not efforting we are concerned with here.

2-Being aware of Awareness-Normally we notice the Awareness and somehow feel we have seen it all, that we know what Awareness is. Notice the subtle sense that we may have that "Oh yes, Awareness is here, I see it" and then attention is pulled at some point to what we are aware of, such as a thought. But what if we haven't really seen the Awareness fully? Could Awareness be the most exciting thing on the planet? What if you are missing out of the goodies? So when you notice Awareness is present next time, try

to really get curious about the Awareness. See if you can get really interested in it. Perhaps admit that you do not really know what it is and be open continuously to see. This is true devotion to the Truth!

3-Noticing the Contextual Field-Usually we notice the Field that everything is appearing in and then at some point we go back to looking at things appearing inside this Field. This focus of attention on the Field is only for a short while and then, seemingly involuntarily, our attention is pulled to the phenomena (such as thoughts) showing up in the Field. This is because we are only “half interested” in the Field, based on the idea that we have seen it already, we know what it is. Notice that our mind wants to make a final conclusion that we know what the Contextual Field is AND that it assumes that the objects appearing in the Field are exciting, relevant and important than the Field itself. Zooming out to notice the Field around the objects is key and then getting very curious about the Field, inviting it gently to show you all that it wants to show you. What if we treat the Field as our best friend with plenty of amazing secrets but it will not tell us them until we are really paying attention.

Exercises for this month:

I suggest doing these exercises together as a group and/or with your GP buddy/buddies or in the GP Sanghas. Discuss your doubts, challenges and insights with each other.

1-Find your best way to tune into the Noumenon and apply what you have learned here. When you are noticing the Noumenon, by whichever doorway you find easiest, try to really notice it. Be curious about it, as if you have never seen it before. Really give all your attention to it, as you would give attention to someone very important, or to your beloved spouse. Treating the Noumenon with reverence is enough, knowing the mystery is always revealing itself to us and that we have not ever seen it all, we will feel deeply peaceful.

2-Try to notice when your mind is thinking and bring intense focus back to the Noumenon. See if you can stay consciously aware of the Noumenon for longer periods and do it more often. It may start to occur spontaneously anyway. It is like a spiritual muscle we are building.

3-See if you can notice the urge to think arising before a thought actually appears. You'll it as a subtle movement of energy arising and can learn to simply ignore it and the thoughts will not form. This urge or desire to think will become more obvious as you continue to meditate, so don't worry if you cannot notice it as yet. In time it will become very obvious. Mind needs your energy to form thoughts, you are the Creator of thoughts and if you simply turn away from that urge to think (without making it wrong but it just feels nicer to be super aware of the Field) then no thoughts can arise and your attention stops being pulled away.