

# What are the Best Meditation Techniques?

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There are many schools of thought on meditation and many things to focus your mind on. The general idea consistent throughout different meditation techniques is the idea that you should be able to turn off the mind's stream of endless thoughts and focus on something that will help you achieve peace, and ultimately self-realization.

Some teachers give you something to look at. Maybe it's a candle or a picture or a blank wall. You might be told to sit in a 'meditation position' and try to shut out everything but the object you are looking at. Another technique is using sound within your mind. Many meditation teachers will give you a sound that you can say in your mind, focusing on it to achieve some sort of peace. This meditation is done in silence, thinking of the sound they gave you. Other teachers will have you think of nothing and meditate on nothingness'.

## **Spiritual Sound**

You can also focus the mind on an external spiritual sound. This can be done in three different ways. You can say the mantras aloud as you chant on beads (Japa Meditation), you can sing the mantras to music (Kirtan) and you can say the mantra aloud as you breathe in and out. With each of these techniques of mantra meditation, you simply focus on the sound. Some things to keep in mind when deciding which meditation practice to do.

An important thing to consider when doing a meditation practice is the question, "what is the goal of these meditations, and what is it that you are looking for?" Also, you have to see where the meditation process is coming from and where it will take you. Is the process originating from a pure source, or was this process created by someone to gain money and/or fame? And, what will be the result of following the practice?

It's very important not to accept a spiritual path, and its methods of realization lightly. You have to discriminate and search out a process that will work and bring you to self-realization, which is the foundation of actual peace.

## **What is self-realization?**

Self-realization is the understanding of who you are. Are you the body? Are you the mind? Are you material? Are you spirit? What is spirit? And so on...

The fact is, you are completely separate from material energy. You are neither the body nor the mind, which are made of a combination of gross and subtle 'ingredients'

of material energy. You are the consciousness, the person, within the material body. You are the person, that is perceiving everything around you. You are spiritual in essence and completely spiritually pure, having nothing to do with the material world. However, without knowing this fact of our identity, and thinking you are this body and mind, one becomes frustrated, restless, and unhappy. This is because you are trying to satisfy the wrong “You” by following the material demands of the body and mind. This leaves one forever short of being satisfied. This is because you are not material and nothing from this material world can satisfy you on this level.

## **You Are Not Your Body**

To become happy, you must find satisfaction on the spiritual level. You must find ‘spiritual food’. You must find a way to bring happiness to the actual spiritual YOU. The eternal spiritual being within this material body—the soul.

Here are a few quotes from the *BhagavadGita: As It Is*, which reinforce this understanding of identity:

- Bg 2:12 — Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be.
- Bg 2:17 — That which pervades the entire body you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy that imperishable soul.
- Bg 2:20 — For the soul, there is neither birth nor death at any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.

## **Which is the Best Meditation Technique**

To become happy, you must find something that can nourish you spiritually. Therefore, it can be reasonably understood that silence or any material sound is not going to help you. No matter how quiet you are, you, the soul, will not derive any real lasting benefit from this. No matter how long you look at a candle, you will not attain anything spiritual from this activity. A candle is a candle. It is material, not spiritual. Likewise, any material sound will not make you happy or help you attain spiritual realizations. The sound “chair” will never bring any happiness to the soul. “Chair” is a word/sound that comes from this material dimension and is, therefore, material. The sounds we hear every day are material and they do not bring about self-realization. In fact, the more you hear a material sound, the more tired you get of it. Does anyone want to listen to “Stairway to Heaven” again? Or whatever song you are tired of hearing. The material sound gets old.

## **Spiritual Sound The Best Method of Meditation**

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came to this world just over 500 years ago. He came to emphasize that in order to find the happiness we are looking for, one must say and hear spiritual sounds. This sound must come from the spiritual realm and must be passed down from one self-realized soul to another. If you receive the sound in this way and you follow the meditation technique of focusing on this sound, you will quickly attain the peace and happiness you are looking for.

These sounds are not material. They are completely spiritual and contain the entire spiritual realm within the sound. If one simply takes this sound and meditates on it, they will quickly achieve self-realization. Meaning, you will gradually realize you are not the body and begin to understand your eternal identity and function. This process comes directly from the Supreme. It is not concocted by some person for various purposes. This process has been passed down from one self-realized soul to another and is now available to you.