

Contemplation as a Methodology for Spiritual Connection

In this article, I am going to explore the methodology of contemplation as a means to explore personalized truth and spiritual bonding. As with any technique, it is important to remember that contemplation is a tool. Thus, undertaking contemplation will not automatically translate into a free ticket into Heaven or automatically transport you to Nirvana. Nor will reading this article cause you to suddenly realize your true potential with ultimate understanding of the universe. Contemplation is merely one method used by some individuals to gain insight into themselves, their beliefs, and into the workings of the universe. If this methodology suits your particular purposes, then use it. If not, modify the methodology or find another more suitable alternative.

What is Contemplation?

Contemplation is a process in which a person focuses his or her full attention on a single reading, scripture, or hymn. This can be accomplished by reading a piece of text and then thinking about the deeper meaning of that text, by saying the piece aloud and concentrating on the purpose of the words, or by reciting a reading from memory over and over again to understand the religious significance of the words. In each case, an individual thinks about the deeper meaning of the piece, the purpose of the work, or how that reading gives glory to the universe. To facilitate concentration, contemplation is often undertaken while in a comfortable immovable position such as sitting. It is of note, that though traditionally contemplation was undertaken with bible scripture in mind, that any piece of sacred text, prose, or poetry can be used to uncover personal spiritual connections.

How Does Contemplation Differ from Meditation? How Does It Differ from Praying?

Unlike contemplation, meditation is undertaken to focus the mind away from thinking in order to still the conscious mind. This is done in a number of ways and using a variety of methods such as repelling thoughts, counting breaths, flame watching, walking therapy, and repeating mantras. Other articles in the future will likely be dedicated to further explanation of such methodologies.

Praying, like contemplation, is a conscious effort. However, unlike the logical analysis process of contemplation, praying is more of an internal conversation with a purpose, usually asking for guidance or favours from a particular deity.

What is the Ultimate Purpose of Contemplation?

Contemplation can be used in a number of different ways. This methodology can be used to uncover hidden or symbolic meaning or create interpretations of sacred texts. Contemplation can also be used to examine concepts, feelings, and underlying beliefs held by the writer of a particular work. These concepts can then be compared to those of the individual for personal validity or used to stretch the individual's mind to include the potential of alternative viewpoints. Moreover, these aspects can be examined in an analytical way and used to heal negative recollections or emotions brought up by a certain text. In this way, the potential usages of contemplation are as varied as the individuals who undertake this methodology.

Steps for Contemplation:

1. Select your favourite scripture, poem, inspirational story, or affirmation.
2. Sitting in a quiet comfortable position, read over your text. If you wish you may say the text aloud or repeat the text over and over in your mind.
3. Close your eyes and think about the meaning of the text. Is there some deep or hidden meaning in this piece? Do you feel any sort of connection to this work? What does this text tell you about the way the universe works, about appropriate conduct, and about acceptable life purposes?
4. Ask yourself how the meaning and purpose of this text fits into your view of the world. How do these deeper meanings make you feel? Do they reinforce or conflict with your religious beliefs? Do they tell you anything about yourself?
5. Incorporate this new knowledge into a better understanding of yourself, your life purpose, and your place in the universe.

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About the Author

Dr. Tami Brady is the author of numerous self help, spiritual, and poetry titles. She is also founder of Allies of Hope, a collaboration of Reiki practitioners, spiritual healers, and other caring individuals who send loving Reiki energies, spiritual healing and/or prayers to those who find themselves in troubled times feeling alone, defeated, and in dire need of unconditional love and acceptance. More information about Tami, her publications, and the Allies of Hope project can be found on her website at <http://www.tami-brady.com>.