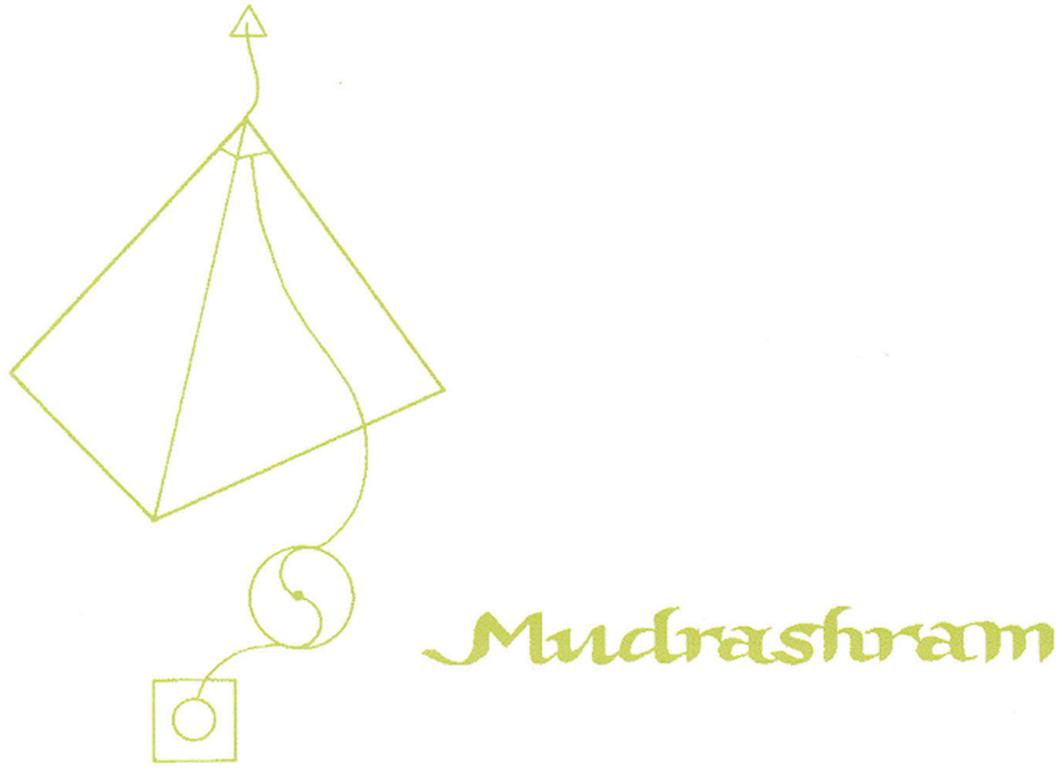


Consciousness Studies Workshop

Facilitated by George A. Boyd, MA





A Meditation Training Program of
The Mudrashram ® Institute of Spiritual Studies

Consciousness Studies Workshop

By George A. Boyd, MA © 2013



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The Mudrashram® Institute of Spiritual Studies



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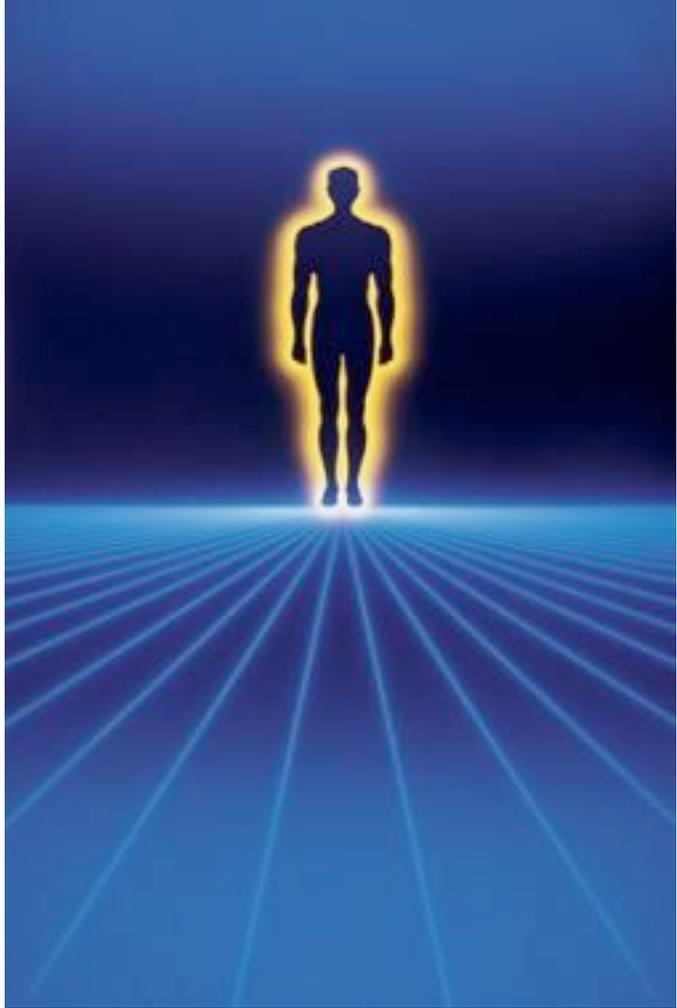


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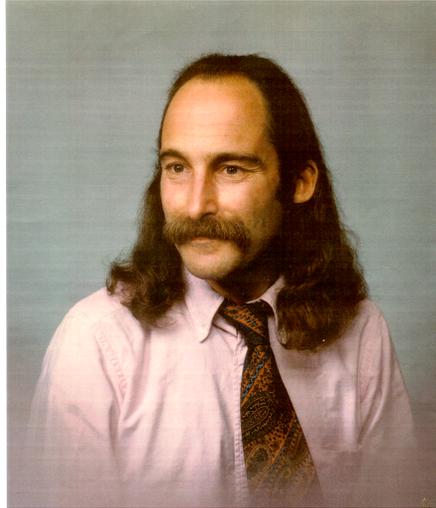
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George A. Boyd is a meditation teacher, counselor, and author, who has been offering a variety of educational and guidance services to the public since 1983. You can learn more about his services at <http://www.mudrashram.com>.



George has studied and practiced meditation since 1965. He is an expert meditation teacher and an innovator in the field of meditation. He developed a system of integral meditation in 1983 that he has taught to groups and individuals since that time. He was listed in *Who's Who Among Young American Professionals* in 1988 for his contributions to this field.

George holds a BA in Psychology from UCLA, an MA in Clinical Psychology from California State University, Dominguez Hills, and an Alcohol Drug Counseling Certificate from UCLA Extension. He has additional training in Psychosynthesis, Voice Dialogue, Focusing, hypnotherapy, Movement Expression™ dance work, and Neuro-Linguistic Programming.

George held groups for adult children of dysfunctional families for one and one half years. He facilitated Social Skills Training groups for five years. He worked as a drug abuse counselor for three and one half years with heroin addicts. He did his graduate clinical traineeship with a dual diagnosis population.

He has worked as an academic and vocational counselor for 16 years. He has been honored by inclusion in *Who's Who Among America's Teachers* for 2005 and 2006 for his role in service to youth.

He has presented public lectures and workshops on meditation at the Whole Life Expo and Learning Adventures. He was invited to speak at Babaji's Parliament of Yoga and World Religions in 1993.

George is the author of *Drugs and Sex*, published by The Rosen Publishing Group in 1994. He has self-published sixteen books, several workbooks for meditation classes that he has developed, and a correspondence course for advanced meditation students. He has written many articles about the practice of meditation and its applications, and about recovery from addiction. A selection of his articles and poetry may be found on his web site, <http://www.mudrashram.com>. You may order his self-published books on <http://www.mudrashrampublishing.com>.

Introduction to the Study of Consciousness

In today's webinar, we will examine consciousness through different perspectives. We will draw from our writing on this subject, and lead you through a series of evocative exercises to help you directly experience these essences.

While many of those who are taking this workshop will have meditated before, and have been able to lift off out of their waking state of awareness—some of you will have never done so. For those of you who have not meditated, but perhaps read scientific papers and books on this subject, we will be breaking new ground in our explorations today, and we welcome you to join us.

Perspectives on Consciousness

To begin our explorations today, we will look at some of the ways you can experience consciousness, objectively and subjectively. We will describe some of the different perspectives through which you encounter consciousness.

1. **The activity of the brain.** In this perspective, the activity of the living brain creates consciousness. The presence of consciousness can be inferred, by observing overt behavior, or through monitoring evoked responses to experimental stimuli. The secretion of selected neurotransmitters can be measured. The firing of neurons can be captured through an electroencephalograph (EEG). Activity of discrete areas of the brain can be mapped through positron emission tomography (PET) scans, and other methods, which use radioactively tagged molecules to light up areas of the brain. This objective approach uses an empirical and scientific examination of consciousness to uncover facts about what it might be.

2. **Witnessing the brain, and the contents of consciousness.**
This approach explores the brain from the standpoint of the witnessing attention. Here you learn to focus and isolate your attention, to scan through your body and your brain. This is the first step of what is called mindfulness—subjective observation of the contents of consciousness.
3. **Observing the contents of a vehicle of consciousness.** This type of inner observation becomes possible when attention is able to lift up off the ground state of awareness and follow the “thread of consciousness” into an altered state of awareness (ASA). The meditator experiences an ASA as a contextual perspective—for example, the awareness of movement and body position in the present time, or the awareness of sensations from the environment. The meditator may also be aware of a field of consciousness, a point where attention appears to focus (a focal point), and sometimes, a background of darkness behind a lighted area of consciousness. A variety of techniques, including steady gazing or concentration, watching the breath, or repeating a mantra can produce an ASA.
4. **Finding an integrative center.** As meditation deepens, you encounter inner centers that appear to coordinate the activity of other aspects of the mind. For example, you may contact the ego, which appears to integrate the activity of what we term the Conscious mind—linking the activity of the waking state of awareness with the awareness of movement, the external senses, internal body sensations, feelings, thoughts, identity roles and responsibilities, choices, and memory. At a deeper level of the mind, the meditator will find the Self, which appears to coordinate the activity of the entire personality. This integration center appears to use volition to initiate self-directed action; this discovery brings the sense that you are the creator and director of what you experience in your life.

5. **Finding an immortal essence of consciousness.** As your meditation deepens, and you focus your attention in specific ways, you encounter one or more of the conscious essences within you—what we call the attentional principle, the spirit, and the Soul. These essences are innately conscious—when your attention unites with them, you recognize that they are conscious entities, which are at the core of who you are. [We teach specific methods to activate these conscious essences in the Accelerated Meditation Program and the Mudrashram® Master Course in Meditation.]
6. **Discovering the “mirror-like wisdom.”** As your attention penetrates into the Superconscious mind, you become aware of the consciousness of the Soul reflected in the vehicles of the Superconscious mind. You discover the context of consciousness that is your Soul’s unique perspective on the inner and outer cosmos. In the state of Samadhi or Satori, you directly experience this multi-dimensional state of intuitive knowing. [We teach how to tap this state of awareness in the Mudrashram® Advanced Course in Meditation.]
7. **Tracking the Great Continuum of Consciousness.** As you move beyond the Soul’s consciousness, you become aware of the greater Continuum—much of it shrouded in the darkness of the unconscious mind—in which your Soul dwells. [The contents of this Continuum—sans the darkness—have been described in the Mudrashram® Correspondence Course, one of our advanced meditation programs].

Trying to Find Consciousness in the Brain

When you are objectively trying to describe consciousness using the scientific method, you will confine your search within known empirical parameters. This means that you will attempt to isolate consciousness to the activity of cells, molecules, atoms, and the subatomic field. If it exists outside of those parameters, you won’t find it.



If your search is within the cells, you will examine how nerve cells fire, and how they produce behavior, speech, and emotions. You will notice how damage to the brain affects these functions.

If you look at molecules, you will examine the effects of neurotransmitters and hormones on these functions, and also on human motivation, pleasure and pain, and the mechanism of craving and addiction.

If you go down to the atomic level, you will track the energetic products of the brain through evoked potentials, EEG, and other types of brain scans that show activity in different parts of the brain.

If your quest is within the subatomic field, you look for warping or patterning of the subatomic field within and around the apparent body matrix. You might, for example, track the influence of thought on this matrix, or whether the mind can influence objects at a distance.

Try as you might, you won't find consciousness in these zones of inquiry, only the effects of consciousness.

You can see how a thought lights up an area in the brain, but you can't detect what generates that thought. You can determine that someone who does a particular form of meditation generates a particular pattern of brain waves, but you can't say anything about what they consciously experience while they do that meditation.

To see if the brain is the source of consciousness, we will do some evocative meditation to explore the brain's role in behavior and thought. We will do, as Albert Einstein called his imaginative conjectures, a thought experiment.



Behavior Experiment

Focus your attention so you are aware of your brain. Decide on how you want to move your left hand. Observe what happens in your brain when you make the decision.

Now move your hand. Notice what happens in your brain and the nerves leading to your hand as you do this.

Consider: is this just your brain doing this? Or did something in you, apart from the brain, tell your brain what to do?

If something other than the brain generated this suggestion, what is this essence? Is it the brain itself, or is it something else?

Thinking Experiment

Think these ideas in turn, and notice how your brain reacts:

Blue

Eggplant

Liberty

Conflict

Abrogation

God

What areas of your brain lit up as you suggested each word? Did the brain bring up an image for each word? Were there particular feelings associated with each word?

Did the brain think these words? Or did you suggest these words to the brain, and it reacted to them?

Does the brain transmit thought, and turn it into action, speech, and emotions? Or does the brain generate thought, and we observe it?

If the brain transmits thought, what generates the thought? Is there an “I” that generates the thought?

If the brain generates thought, what observes it? Does the brain’s activity generate the “Observer,” or is the observer a separate essence—“mind” as the Buddhists call it, or the “attention” as we call it?

If your answers to these exercises are that it was something other than the brain that generated the movement of your hand or the suggestion of thought, you could conclude that consciousness cannot be delimited by the activity of the brain—that it cannot be fully described within the parameters of cells, molecules, atoms, energy, or the subatomic field.

For those of you who might have never meditated before, this evocative exercise might have opened the door enough to give you a glimpse of something beyond the brain. Perhaps this is still a mystery to you... you aren’t sure if this is just a perceptual anomaly, or if you are really observing the brain as an objective witness.

If you will stay with us, we are going to show you how to open the door, so you—the attention, mind, or observer—can move through it into another level of awareness.



You see a stone fall into the water and generate ripples. Does the pond generate the ripples, or the stone? And who throws the stone?

Brain and Attention

To begin the process of meditation, let us do some more evocative exercises to (a) discern the nature of attention, (b) focus the attention, and (c) move the attention.

Those of you who are experienced meditators may wish to adopt these subtle distinctions to hone your own meditation practice, and to help you teach others to meditate.

Scan the Brain

Focus your attention inside the skull. See if you can detect the structures of your brain and the cells that make up those structures.

Microconcentration on the Brain

As you more finely concentrate your attention, see if you can detect the molecules, the atoms, the energy, and the subatomic field that makes up the living brain.

Focusing Attention

Focus your attention on the observer. Repose in this state until you can just be this observer.

[This is what we call collecting the attention or “mind stuff” at the medulla center. This is where attention dwells in the waking state of awareness. *To begin meditation, you isolate your attention.*]

Watching the Breath

As you watch your breath go in and out, you notice that your breath appears to come from beyond you, from some deeper place within you.

[This makes you aware that breath is a portal into an altered state of awareness. It opens the possibility that there is another state of awareness beyond you.]

Drop Attention into the Breath

Now you will release your attention into the breath and let it travel into an altered state of awareness.

[This passive absorption into the current of the breath is called laya. Here you follow the current and it carries you. You do not direct where it carries you.]

Use Intention to Move Attention

Focus your attention on the focal point for

- The movement awareness center
- The sensory center
- The body awareness center
- The feeling center
- Reason
- The ego
- The preconscious

Then return to waking awareness.

You can move attention along the thread of consciousness though fixation on a focal point—here, you direct your attention using intention. This is called *tratakam*.

You can use a mantra coordinated to each focal point, such as the “han sa” breath.

Using Landmarks

Once you have identified the sequence of nodal points that make up your inner “map” of consciousness, you can direct your attention to selected focal points at will.

We show you in our courses how to focus attention directly on the attentional principle, the spirit, the Self, and the Soul. This enables you to perform Centering Meditation on the Self; and Transcendence Meditation, using the attentional principle and the spirit to travel into the Superconscious mind, and to consciously unite with the Soul.

Focus, Observe, Monitor

Focus your attention on your feeling center. Observe your attention is present in this location. Monitor the feelings that arise in this moment. This threefold process is called *mindfulness*.

Inner Sensing

Keep your attention focused on your feeling center. If your eyes are not closed, close them. What do you see at this location? What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you taste? What is the energy or quality here?

The Thread of Consciousness

The thread of consciousness connects the focal points in each of your vehicles of consciousness. These focal points, where you focus your attention, are called *seed atoms*.

These seed atoms are interspersed at regular, harmonic intervals along this thread of consciousness. When you focus your attention at a focal point, you are actually contemplating one of these seed atoms, and becoming aware of the content of this vehicle of consciousness in which the seed atom is embedded.

This thread of consciousness goes between one seed atom and another through each vehicle of consciousness in your Conscious mind, your Subconscious mind, your Metaconscious mind, and your Superconscious mind, up to the presence of your Soul.

If you reach this level, you discover that this thread of consciousness goes even higher, up to higher octaves of being—levels we call the Monad, the Astral Soul, the Supracosmic Soul, to one of your ensouling entities in the Transcendental Sphere, and up to the Eternal Consciousness we call Satchitananda.

When you lift your eyes to gaze at the point between your eyebrows, you engage this thread of consciousness. You might imagine that there is a golden, energetic thread that is connected there, at the point between the eyebrows—that travels upwards through each of your inner vehicles of consciousness.

Remembrance

When your attention traces this thread of consciousness, it allows you to remember each level of awareness within you. You remember the Self, the Soul, the nature of any higher essence within you that you are using as the object of your meditation.

Can you remember your attentional principle? Your Self? Your spirit? Your Soul? Your Astral Soul? Your Supracosmic Soul? Satchitananda?

If you have never meditated and placed your attention on these essences, you might not understand what these are. No one has showed you what these words indicate. You have never placed your attention on this essence and realized, “Oh, *this* is my Soul!”

So through this thread of consciousness, you remember the landmarks within you. You select one level to be the object of your meditation.

You identify an essence that you wish to contemplate, and then you project your attention along this thread until your attention becomes one with this essence.

When you keep your attention focused here, you gain union with that essence and become one with it. This is called *Samadhi*.

Tracing Your Thread of Consciousness

Focus on the point between the eyebrows and see if you can detect this thread of consciousness. Where does it go? Can you find the end of it? Do you recognize any of the points along this thread?

How deep have you traveled on this thread? Have you ever traveled on it to the other side? Where does it go?

Using Structured Landmarks to Explore Levels of Consciousness

In our classes and webinars, we have used our map of the Great Continuum of Consciousness as a foundation for our consciousness studies and meditation programs.

Those of you who may not be familiar with this map can review it at <http://www.mudrashram.com/GCC2.html>. This map is also found in our comprehensive textbook on meditation, *A Mudrashram® Reader: Understanding Integral Meditation*.

Our objective in our webinar today will be to inventory in which of these centers of awareness you have (a) focused your attention, and (b) can clearly identify that vehicle of consciousness and the content of that vehicle from your meditation experience. This will enable you to identify what you need to work on to complete your experiential mapping of all of the levels of awareness within you.

Meditation mastery involves not merely practicing a technique and passively traveling to an inner location, but to be able to travel to any identified inner location at will.

Key Centers of the Conscious Mind

State of Awareness	Content	Focused Attention Here	Can Identify This Center
The waking state of awareness	Ground state of attention		
Present time awareness, awareness of movement and body position	Current moment of human life		
Sensory awareness	Awareness of the external environment through the five senses		
Body awareness	Awareness of the sensations and physiological movement, such as breath, heartbeat and circulation		
Emotional awareness	Awareness of feelings arising in the present time		
Thinking awareness	Awareness of behavioral commands, analogical and logical thinking in the present time; the faculty of Reason		
Ego awareness	Awareness of the state of identity of the Conscious mind, the ego: its reactions, its defenses, and its attitudes in the present time		
Preconscious awareness	Awareness of material welling up into the Conscious mind from the Subconscious mind		
Gate of the Subconscious	Also called the Etheric Veil, these inner gates keep the attention within the sphere of the Conscious mind		

Key Centers of the Subconscious Mind

State of Awareness	Content	Focused Attention Here	Can Identify This Center
Memory and the Personal Unconscious	Repository of life experiences, both readily recalled by the Conscious mind and those that are not readily recalled		
Seat of the Kundalini Shakti	The energy of awareness. In its dormant state, it energizes the centers of the Conscious mind. When awakened, it brings energy and awareness into the vehicles of the Subconscious, Metaconscious and Superconscious mind.		
The Seven Chakras	Centers of creative intelligence that organize experience. These appear as lotus flowers of varying numbers of petals that are aligned along the cerebrospinal axis.		
Pituitary Center	Seat of the attentional principle.		
Pineal Center	Seat of the spirit and entrance to the inner current of light and sound (Nada).		
The Astral Body	Vehicle of so-called astral projection and clairvoyant seeing.		
The Causal Body	Repository of karmic impressions (sins, samskaras), which are effaced by meditation practice and living through		
The Toruses of Purpose and 8 petalled lotus center	13 “crowns,” which mirror the fulfillment of human destiny in your current life and your spiritual development in the 12 higher spiritual domains; and the seat of the guide (8 petalled lotus)		

Key Centers of the Metaconscious Mind

State of Awareness	Content	Focused Attention Here	Can Identify This Center
Ethereic Vehicle	This life force matrix underlies movement, sensation, and activation of physiological processes, memory, and integrated functioning of all systems. The etheric body also contains the seed atoms of the ensouling entity for the Subtle/Planetary and higher realms.		
Desire body	The nucleus underlying strong attraction and aversion, this center magnetizes goal objects, and makes commitment and dedication possible.		
Persona	Social roles, humor, personification, adoption of imaginary roles (role-play) are mediated by this center. This center allows you to play and have fun, as well as act appropriately when the situation requires it.		
Conscience	The moral values and ethical codes by which you correct and evaluate your behavior.		
Concrete Mind	This aspect of the mind makes work possible. It is responsible for planning, scheduling, tracking steps for the accomplishment of goals, and recognizing when objectives have been reached.		

Key Centers of the Metaconscious Mind (continued)

State of Awareness	Content	Focused Attention Here	Can Identify This Center
Intellect	This aspect of the mind makes abstract thinking possible. Whereas reason uses analogy (parable) and deductive reasoning, the intellect uses dialectical and inductive reasoning. The intellect solves problems using discrete strategies upon verbal, numerical, symbolic arrays, and upon models of the real world. It is the part of your mind that receives formal education. It permits people to communicate abstract concepts that are not tied to environmental objects, like freedom, justice and love.		
Intuition	This aspect of the mind allows self-awareness. From this center, you can view the present time activity of each of your centers of consciousness in your Conscious, Subconscious, and Metaconscious minds. It allows you to monitor and “check in” with yourself.		
Volition	This is Will, the center where you have free choice about what you will do, be and have in your life. It directs, controls, and permits activity in each of the vehicles of your Conscious, Subconscious and Metaconscious minds.		
The Self	The nucleus of your personality. It is a center of awareness, will and joy. This center is specifically accessed by the Centering Techniques.		

Key Centers of the Metaconscious Mind (continued)

State of Awareness	Content	Focused Attention Here	Can Identify This Center
Being	The voidness of the Buddhists, the peace beyond understanding of the Christians, this is your ability to stop doing anything and just be. It is a state of complete peace and repose.		

Key Centers of the Superconscious Mind

State of Awareness	Content	Focused Attention Here	Can Identify This Center
<i>The Subtle Realm</i>			
Annamayakosa	Body of Nature, union with Nature		
Pranamayakosa	Body of life force		
Manomayakosa	Body of ideas		
Vijnanamayakosa	Body of revelation		
Anandamayakosa	Body of bliss		
Your form in the Subtle Realm	This is an archetypal form that might appear as a god or goddess of one of the major world civilizations, a dark form on the Lower Astral, or a wizard in the Subtle Illumined Mind		



State of Awareness	Content	Focused Attention Here	Can Identify This Center
<i>The Planetary Realm</i>			
Biophysical Universe	Culture and nature, tantric sexuality, Native American shamanic religion, origins of biological life, origins of the physical universe		
Abstract Mind Plane	Self-programming, Science, Art, Philosophy, Akashic Records, the Universal Mind, Masters of Mind		
Psychic Realm	Psychic powers, astrology and metaphysics, contact with UFOs and spirit guides, healing, visions of the afterlife		
Wisdom Plane	Working out karma, learning the great lessons of life, the 12 sages		
1st Planetary Initiation (exoteric)	Judaism, Christianity, Democracy—religious and social movements, development of the moral will, ministry of faith, following established doctrine		
1st Planetary Initiation (mesoteric)	Mystic visions of the Great Judge, Hell, Purgatory, Heaven, the Angels, the Saints, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the Being of God, ministry of the Holy Spirit		
1st Planetary Initiation (esoteric)	The 12 Mystery Schools, the Magus		

State of Awareness	Content	Focused Attention Here	Can Identify This Center
<i>The Planetary Realm (continued)</i>			
2nd Planetary Initiation	The Solar Angel, the higher mystery schools, the Ascended Masters, mastery of the 3rd spiritual domain, ministry of the spoken word		
3rd Planetary Initiation	The Manasic Plane, the New World Servers, building thought forms, ministry by concretized thought		
4th Planetary Initiation	The Buddhic Plane, the “rain cloud of all Knowledge,” ministry by radiation from the Illumined Mind		
5th Planetary Initiation	The Atmic or Soul Plane, realization of Soul beyond all vehicles, activation of Transpersonal Will, culminating in union with the Monad. You realize your Soul at this level.		
<i>The Transplanetary Realm</i>			
Ground State of the Monad	The state of the Adept		
<i>The Cosmic Sphere</i>			
The Astral Soul	The ensouling entity of the Cosmic Sphere		
Divine Eye Center	Sixth vehicle of consciousness of the Astral Soul, important in Kriya Yoga practice		
Cosmic Consciousness	Nucleus of identity in the First Cosmic Initiation, a key focal point in Yoga traditions		

State of Awareness	Content	Focused Attention Here	Can Identify This Center
<i>The Supracosmic Sphere</i>			
Your Supracosmic Seed Atom	The nucleus of identity, or reflected state of identification on the Supracosmic Path in which your Supracosmic Soul dwells		
Your Supracosmic Soul	Your ensouling entity of the Supracosmic Sphere, which is aligned with one of the 73 Paths in this realm. Focusing on this center enables you to glimpse some of the content of this realm.		
<i>The Transcendental Sphere</i>			
Transcendental Path spiritual essence	This is the spirit on the Transcendental Path aligned with the Axis of Being		
Transcendental Path ensouling entity	This is the ensouling entity on the Transcendental Path aligned with the Axis of Being		
Satchitananda	This is your Eternal Consciousness, the highest state of consciousness		

Advanced students—those who have taken our Mudrashram® Advanced Course in Meditation—may wish to request from us the additional handout for this webinar, “Other Centers of the Superconscious Mind.” This handout will train you to extend your inner contemplation and recognition to each level of the Continuum. Your objective is to be able to travel to any selected level at will, and recognize the content at that level, and to have certain knowledge that you are there—to move from vague and fuzzy to crystal clear.

The Seven Bodies

Modern science attempts to locate consciousness in the physical body. The mystic seers, who transcended the body in meditation, tell us that there are seven bodies.

1. Physical
2. Etheric
3. Astral
4. Causal
5. Mental
6. Higher Mental (Buddhi)
7. Soul

If we are to understand consciousness in its totality, we must extend our grasp of what consciousness is beyond its expression through the physical body, and must learn to recognize it in these higher bodies.

Chakras

One of the concepts that we have learned from the teachers and preceptors of Yoga is that human beings have a physical nervous system, but also a subtle or “occult” nervous system that has integration centers that are called *chakras*. These systems identify seven major chakras.

1. The base of the spine
2. The lower abdomen (navel)
3. The upper abdomen (solar plexus)—in some formulations, this center is identified as the spleen
4. The chest (heart)
5. The neck where it meets the torso (throat)
6. The point where the nose meets the forehead (brow)

7. The top of the head or fontanel (brain)

If we study these integration centers in each of these bodies, we find that chakras have a different appearance depending on which body we encounter them.

Body	What this constellation of centers is called	Description of these chakras
Physical	Neuro-hormonal plexuses	The endocrine glands—testes or ovaries, adrenals, pancreas, thymus, thyroid, pituitary, and pineal glands—and their associated neural plexuses of the central and autonomic nervous system
Etheric	Chakras of the etheric body	Energetic vortices that appear like flowers with four, six, ten, twelve, sixteen, two, and one thousand petals. The centers array on a central tube (sushumna) that are interpenetrated by a helical structure.
Astral	Chakras of the astral body	Whirling disks at the base of spine, navel, solar plexus, heart, throat, and medulla align on the astral spinal tube; there is an eye in the center of the forehead, and a pericarp (resembling Buddha’s crown) on which glowing pastel orbs are arrayed in a spiral pattern.
Causal	Chakras of the causal body	Different archetypal forms (gods and goddesses, angels, sacred symbols) are arrayed in each chakra—these lotus-like arrays may have a mandala of associated symbols or deities that surround them; there may be mantras or sacred sounds ascribed to each chakra

Body	What this constellation of centers is called	Description of these chakras
Mental	The mental matrix [which is some people, appears as the Kabala, or Tree of Life]	Ten centers (Sephiroth), linked by 22 paths, make up this inner constellation of mental chakras. These centers embody the different types of intuition and reflection, including mandalic, synthetic, dialectic, inductive, analogical, symbolic, and deductive reasoning. They convey revelatory, visionary, and symbolic insights; identify correspondences; and activate planning, and problem solving strategies.
Higher Mental	The Glorified Body (Augoiedes)	These appear as seven golden vortices in a golden egg or sun. When these chakras are activated, there is a downpour of intuitive knowledge from the Buddhist Plane.
Soul	The essential body of the Soul	These chakras consist of the track of the kundalini; the Soul's etheric body; the Soul's astral body; the track of the Nada through the heart (the path of the spirit); the Soul's causal body; the triune center uniting love, wisdom, and power; and the concentric spheres of the Soul's consciousness. The Soul dwells directly above this center in the center above the head (transcerebral center).

We will meditate through each of these levels, so you may gain a glimpse of the additional bodies in you. Some of these bodies you will find are fully active; some are dormant.

We will follow the heart thread through these bodies, so you may progressively deepen your meditation into the awareness of the Soul.



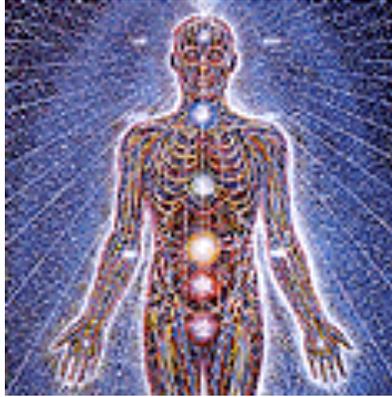
Meditating on the Physical Body

Focus your attention on your physical body. Move your attention from testes/ovaries, to adrenal, to pancreas, to thymus, to thyroid, to pituitary, and to the pineal glands. As you focus on each, notice how each gland is nourished by blood vessels, and connected to the nervous system.

Bring your attention to the autonomic nerve plexuses—epigastric, solar plexus, cardiac, cervical, medulla, and hypothalamus. Notice how each of your organs are nourished by blood vessels and connected to the nervous system. Monitor your reproductive organs, bladder, kidneys, large intestine, small intestine, stomach, spleen, liver, gall bladder, heart, lungs, and salivary glands.

Bring your attention to your brain. Notice how the brain connects to each of your muscles, to each of your senses, to each of your organs, and to each of your glands.

Notice that brain your seamlessly integrates the functioning of all of your tissues with its organismic wisdom. Notice this organismic wisdom is operating in this moment. Feel deep respect and gratitude for this body.



Meditating on Your Etheric Body

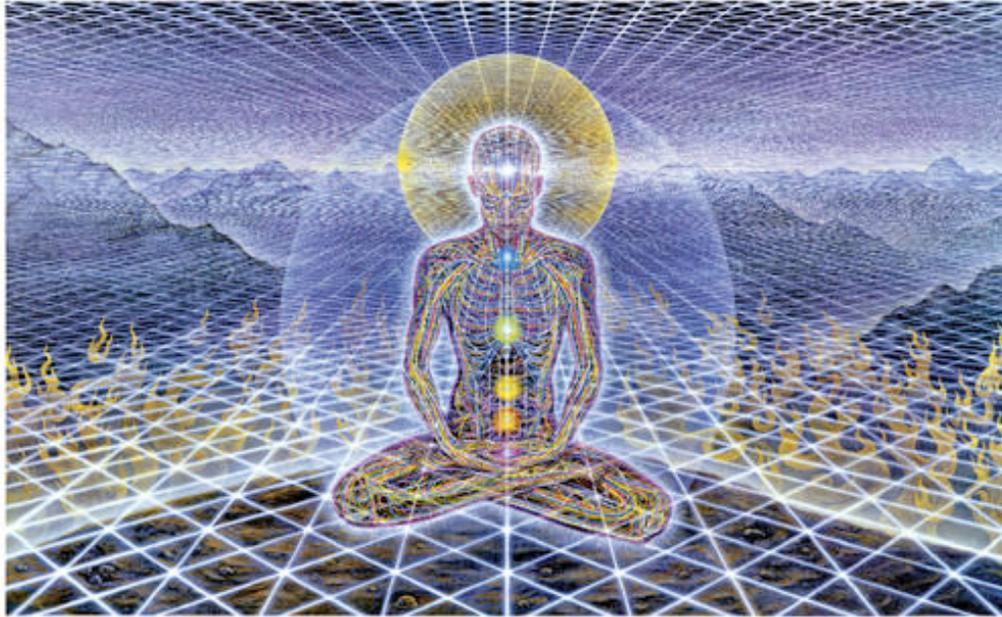
Feel that behind each of your glands there is a current of energy. This current of energy connects with an energetic vortex. Focus your attention through each of these vortices in turn, beginning with the center at the base of the spine, navel, solar plexus, heart, throat, brow, and crown.

Feel the energetic connection with your organs. These are the meridians of your etheric body.

Now feel there is a sphere around the vortex in your brain—that is filled with a series of fine channels—in which your thoughts resonate. These are the nadis of your etheric body.

Focus at the fontanel center. You will feel a structure like a goblet or cup, through which light pours into your etheric body from your Soul. Feel this energy pouring into you. This is the light of life.





Meditating on your astral body

Excerpted from *The Psychic Realm:
Finding Safe Passage through the Worlds of Illusion* © 2010

As you follow the heart thread, you next enter your astral body. Focus your attention through the spine, face, forehead, and brain centers as described below.

“The surface of the astral body shimmers or sparkles. The actual body is opalescent, and resembles the physical body in appearance. However, the astral body may resemble the form of a younger or older physical form...”

“The astral body connects to the medulla center by an umbilical cord-like structure that is referred to as the silver cord in esoteric literature. This cord is infinitely extensible, yet tethers or anchors the astral body to the body’s etheric matrix or chakra.”

“In its ground state, the astral body is effectively superimposed on the physical form. When the physical body’s arm moves, for example, the astral body’s arm also moves.”

“Upon moving through the astral umbilicus, the meditator enters the astral spiritual tube, in which the meditator’s attention encounters six whirling wheels. These wheels are located at the”

Base of Spine

Navel

Solar Plexus

Heart

Throat

Medulla

“Moving into the level of the face, of the astral body, the meditator encounters the astral senses of sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste. At the point between the eyebrows, the meditator finds the center of the astral will, by which the limbs, face and torso of the astral body can be moved.”

“Astral movement corresponds to our faculty of imagination. In imagination, we can walk through a wall, fly through space, translocate to another place or move through time. Astral movement replicates whatever is visualized. The faculty of intention, which is anchored in the attentional principle, generates visualization.”

“In the center of the forehead of the astral body is the so-called third eye. It is a blissful mirror of spiritual development in the Cosmic Realm, and is a source of intuitive wisdom. It embodies an inner knowing of the laws of the Superconscious Mind, and sees the Astral Planes of the Great Continuum of Consciousness.

“The astral brain resembles a spiral of colored spheres that culminate in a central jet or flare of light. This central flame is referred to as the Jyoti in Eastern scriptures. The meditator beholds a rainbow of pastel-colored spheres, ranging from rose-colored to violet to brilliant white.”



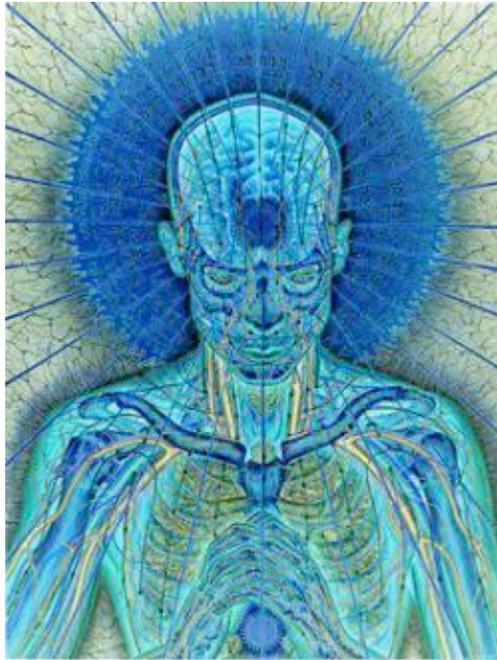
Meditating on your causal body

Your causal body is the multi-dimensional repository of the abilities and wisdom your Soul has gained. It is also the seat of your active creation of new karmic impressions; plus, it processes and transmutes karmic material drawn from the storehouse of the unconscious mind.

As you follow the heart thread further, you will become aware of a lotus flower within you. In the center of this lotus, a flame is forever burning. As you turn to the four cardinal directions, you become aware of the karmic impressions that process through this vehicle—left front, Pralabdha or Destiny Karma; Right Front, Kriyaman Karma; Right Rear, Adi Karma; and Left Rear, Sinchit Karma.

Contemplate the abilities that your Soul has gained, which are arrayed around the causal body. Reflect upon the wisdom your Soul has learned, through experience and meditation upon the Laws of Mind and Consciousness.

Feel back along the tracks of the four karmas, to intuit how much spiritual work you must complete to obtain Liberation.



Meditating on your mental body

In people, who do not meditate, the mental body only expresses the faculty of reason, memory, and the executive aspects of the personality—conscience, concrete mind, intellect, personal intuition, and volition. Meditation builds an intellectual and intuitive bridge into the Superconscious mind, called the Antakarana—this allows you to channel the higher intuitional knowledge and discernment of your Soul.

To assess the relative development of your mental body, we will use the assessment in the article, “Levels of Thinking,” drawn from the Satsang Program.

“At different bands of the mind, you use different thinking processes. To advance to discipleship, it is important that you be able to recognize these different types of thinking and to be able to shift at will between them.”

[For meditation upon your mental body, you will notice whether each faculty is active in you or dormant. You will also consider where and when you have used each faculty in your life.]

“Contemplate these different levels of thinking within you. Identify when you use them, and what types of stimuli evoke them. Determine what techniques will permit you to activate them at will.”

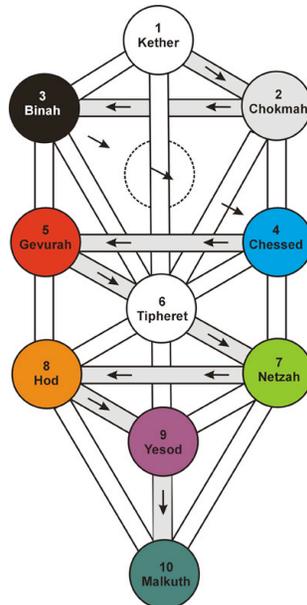
Band of Mind	Default Mode	Function	Content
Conscious	Reason	Reason	Logical analysis, deductive reasoning, reality testing, criticism
		Metaphor	Analogy, finding ways objects are similar, telling stories or parables
		Monitoring	Becoming aware of present time experience of the external senses, sensations arising within the body, the feelings, thoughts, and the reactions of the ego
Subconscious	Memory	Recall	Requesting specific information from the Subconscious storehouse of experience
		Suggestion	Programming the Subconscious mind to carry out a specific command
		Fantasy	The activity of the astral brain. The ability to create novel combinations of sensations in a dreaming, reverie, hypnotic or meditational state
		Visualization	The ability to create an intended image at will

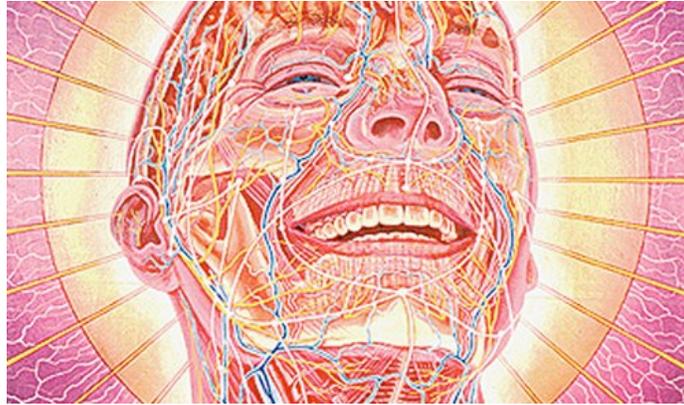


Band of Mind	Default Mode	Function	Content
Metaconscious	Intellect	Goal Setting	Creating an image of an intended result, committing to achieve it and planning the steps to carry it out
		Problem Solving	Using the intelligent strategies of the intellect to solve problems in verbal, mathematical, written, and symbolic form, both academically and in applied situations in daily life.
		Introspection	Comparing speech and behavior against the standards of Conscience
		Reflection	Inductive reasoning, the ability to reflect on the meaning of abstract ideas and their implications
		Insight	The ability of the Intuition to examine the activity of any vehicle of the Conscious, Subconscious and Metaconscious mind



Band of Mind	Default Mode	Function	Content
Superconscious	Discernment	Dialectical reasoning	Reflection on the pairs of opposites and finding their synthesis
		Reception	Listening inwardly to the intuitive guidance of the Soul
		Mandalic reasoning	Discernment of the correspondences of any abstract concept or archetypal form by identifying its counterpart in multiple vehicles or upon different Planes
		Radiation	Sending out ideas to others in the ethers through the suffusion of the Illumined Mind
		Gnosis	Discernment of the true essence that is the ensouling entity



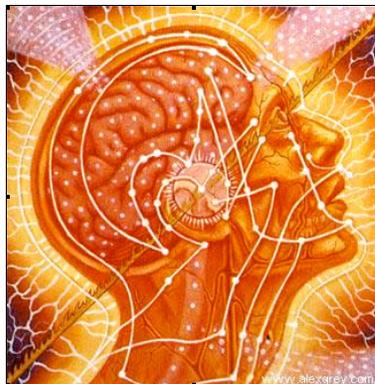


Meditating on your Illumined Mind

Excerpted from The Mudrashram® Correspondence Course © 2006

“The 4th Initiation occurs upon the Buddhic Plane. This Initiation has been referred to as the Rain Cloud of All Knowledge or the Dharma Megha Samadhi. It is a state of radiant mind that is all-penetrating and illuminating. The beams of thought arising from this Plane organize, instruct and purify the other strata of mind contained in the Manasic vehicle, bring highest discernment (viveka) to the Soul, grant wisdom to the spirit, and lead the collective human Life Wave into the next step of the Great Plan.”

“The form of human consciousness on this Plane is the Glorified Golden Sun or *Augoiedes*. It is a body of pure gold that shines like a brilliant golden sun, whose every pore radiates the golden light of illumined wisdom. Simply by holding your attention in the presence of the Buddhic vehicle you are purified.”



The centers of this vehicle are vortices of pure intelligence that radiate out to and suffuse the vehicles on the lower Planes:

Base of spine	Vehicles of the Conscious, Subconscious and Metaconscious mind
Navel	Vehicles in the Subtle Realm
Solar plexus	Vehicles of the Biophysical Universe, Abstract Mind, Psychic Realm and Wisdom Plane
Heart	Vehicles of the First Exoteric, Mesoteric and Esoteric Initiation
Throat	Vehicle of the Second Initiation
Brow	Vehicles of the Third Initiation
Brain	The Golden Sun, the Augoiedes

When these beams of illumined thought are sent down to the lower Planes by Souls at the 4th Initiation and higher levels of Initiation, they are sent through a focal point that appears as a jet or flame of golden light. From this golden vortex, spreading suffusion waves of pulsating, golden ripples of thought purify and transform everything they touch. These jets or flames of thought are anchored in the following vehicles during attunement:

Base of spine	The Intellect in the Metaconscious mind
Navel	The Intellect in the Subtle Planes
Solar plexus	The vehicle upon the Wisdom Plane
Heart	The cerebral center of the vehicle of the First Esoteric Initiation
Throat	The cerebral center of the vehicle of the Second Initiation
Brow	In the thalamic center of the Manasic vortex vehicle



Meditating on the Soul's Essential Form

Excerpted from the Karma Workshop © 2002 by George A. Boyd

The Essential Chakras Meditation

Focus your attention on your Soul. Contemplate the essential chakras as described below.

Chakra	Instrument	Aspect	Keynote(s)
Feet (pedal)	Physical body	Power to act upon the environment	Action, achievement of goals
Base of spine (perineal)	Kundalini Shakti	Energy substanding awareness	Activation of the awareness and activity of the vehicles of consciousness
Navel (sacral)	Etheric body	Power of life force, health and vitality	Life and growth, incarnation of the Soul

Chakra	Instrument	Aspect	Keynote(s)
Solar plexus (lumbar)	Astral body	Power of suggestion, affirmation, and visualization; development of virtue	Imagination, creativity, and manifestation; expression of virtues
Heart (thoracic)	Individual spirit and the path of the Nada	Love of humanity and the Divine	Devotion, service, purification
Throat (cervical)	Causal body	Transmuting experience into wisdom, repository of karma	Transmutation
Forehead (thalamic)	Illumined mind	Expression of the Soul's love, wisdom, power	Illumination, integration, intuitive wisdom
Brain (cerebral)	Soul's consciousness	The rings of consciousness for each opened nodal point on the Path	The Kingdom of God, the inner dimensions of the Superconscious mind
Above the top of the head (transcerebral)	Soul (in its own nature)	Existence, Consciousness, and Bliss	Gnosis

Successively move your attention from the Soul, to your Soul's consciousness, to your Illumined Mind, to your causal body, to your spiritual heart, to your astral body, to your etheric body, to the kundalini track, to your physical body. Then reverse your attention, rising from your physical body to the Soul. Do this until this process is familiar to you, and you have a felt-sense of each of these essential chakras.



Some Closing Thoughts on the Consciousness Studies Workshop

In our workshop today, we have looked at different models of consciousness. You have learned how to meditate on the thread of consciousness that leads upwards through your vehicles of consciousness through the forehead portal. You have also followed the heart thread, and penetrated into your seven bodies, culminating with the contemplation of the Soul.

For some of you attending this workshop, you might have only vague impressions from some of the meditations we did today. For others of you, you might have had some breakthroughs, as you opened new aspects of your awareness that you have never been before. And for a few of you, this workshop has deepened your existing insights, and has renewed your resolve to explore and unfold your consciousness to a greater extend than you have already.