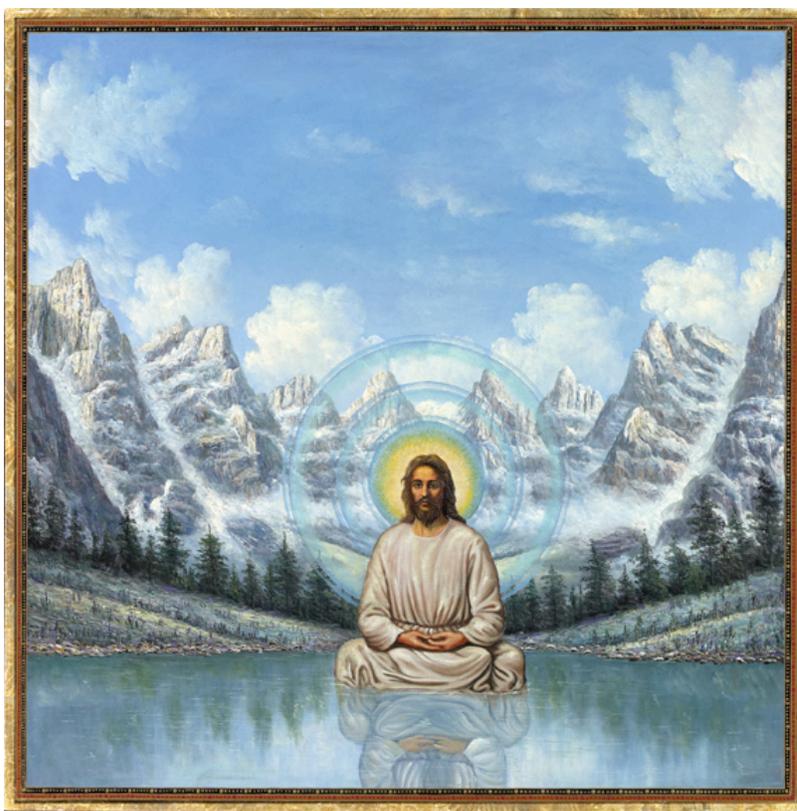


## **An Overview of Effective Meditation: Enhancing the Practice of Raja Yoga**

For today's webinar, we will focus first on gaining perspective on what are the different types of meditation, and how you can use them in daily life. We will then sharpen our focus on Raja Yoga, which is the noetic aspect of meditation.

Since Raja Yoga is one of the core techniques of Integral meditation, it is important for all serious Mudrashram® students to master this method. We will go over the steps of this process, and you can assess which facets of this practice you need to (a) learn, and (b) achieve proficiency with the technique.

We will use this students-only workshop as a forum to answer your questions about this technique, and to help you more effectively practice Raja Yoga.



## **Effective Meditation**

By George A. Boyd ©2001

When people ask you, "why do you meditate?" What do you say?

Do you tell them? "I do it to relieve stress and relax after a strenuous day." "I do it to help clear and focus my mind, so I can concentrate better." "I do it to get centered and grounded." "I do it to help gain a sense of direction and guidance for my life." "I do it to draw closer to God." "I do it to better understand the scriptures of my faith."

Each of these answers is legitimate. People meditate for many reasons.

But it is important to understand the underlying purposes of meditation: what are you ultimately trying to achieve by practicing the techniques of meditation you are using? Considering the seven purposes of meditation may help clarify this question.

### *The Seven Purposes of Meditation*

**Reformative** – You correct inappropriate and harmful behavior, change erroneous beliefs, and alter negative patterns of thinking.

**Contemplative** – You understand the meaning of ideas, symbols, metaphors, parables, and Zen koans. You listen to your Soul's wisdom and to gain guidance and direction for your life.

**Creative** – You anchor suggestions in the Subconscious and Superconscious mind to manifest desired outcomes and realize cherished dreams.

**Devotional** – You establish communion between your spirit and the Divine, through prayer and worship, and meditation upon the Nadamic currents of light and sound.

**Noetic** – You contemplate your spiritual essence to gain intuitive insight and realization, culminating in the experience of Enlightenment and Gnosis.

**Developmental** – You transform the potentials of your spiritual essence to undergo the process of Initiation, culminating in the experience of spiritual Mastery.

**Attunement** – You radiate the pure energies of the Spirit to others through attunement. You express the Spirit as Light Immersion, inspired discourse, writing, teaching, and guiding others in meditation. You channel the Divine Light to assist others in their unfoldment and ascension to Mastery. [This is the expression of spiritual ministry by disciples and Initiates, and their students through which they channel the Light.]

Meditation should not be an experience of drifting off into relaxing, dreamlike trance, in which you passively view colors and surreal imagery. Rather have a purposeful intention for each meditation to accomplish a specific objective. Here are some examples of applying these seven purposes to your meditations:

**Reformative** – Inquire: What might I do to correct this behavior? How can I correct this character flaw? Why do I continue to practice this bad habit? Do process meditation: explore where the pattern originated.

**Contemplative** – Inquire: What does this scripture mean? What does the Sphinx symbolize? What is my service or mission in this life?

**Creative** – Affirm or utilize self-hypnosis: I will exercise daily. I will eat a healthy diet. I will bring more serenity into my life.

**Devotional** – Pray and dialogue with God, and do spiritual meditation: Pray to the Divine. Express your love and gratitude to God. Ask for grace and guidance. Practice Nada Yoga.

**Noetic** – Focus your attention upon: your spirit... your attentional principle... your Soul... Observe: the nodal points you have opened on the Path... the nodal point in which your Soul resides...

**Developmental** – Practice a transformational method: bija mantra or Kriya Yoga. Witness the results of this transformation by the Raja Yoga method of direct projection. Become aware of the vehicles of your Superconscious mind by practicing Kundalini Yoga. Balance your inner development by utilizing the principle of Guru Kripa Yoga, aligning spirit, Soul, and the vehicles of your Superconscious mind to the corresponding nodal point.

**Attunement** – Commune with your inner Master teacher: ask for the Light. Minister the Light to others. Teach and guide others according to your ability and understanding. Share your Soul's gifts and genius with the world.

You make your every day actions count. When you go out shopping, you come back with what you decided to buy. When you go out jogging, you go to the place you said you would and return. Why should meditation be any different?

Make your meditations count, too. Dissolve some of your karma with each meditation. Open some new insights. Make some progress on the spiritual path. Uproot a bad habit. Make a breakthrough. Go further and deeper than you have ever gone before.

In this way, meditation will become like a work you do to accomplish your goals. Only, this work is inside of you. It is personal reformation and growth; it is spiritual transformation and empowerment. Do this inner work in addition to your outer work, and you will find an invaluable treasure: one that will bring fulfillment and joy beyond measure.

### *A Toolbox for Inner Work*

If you don't have the tools, you can't do the job. If you don't know how to do this inner work, you can learn these techniques. Many of them are taught in the Mudrashram® Master Course in Meditation and the Accelerated Meditation Program. Here are some of the techniques you'll learn for each of these purposes:

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Technique(s) in the Master Course or the AMP</b>
Reformative	Process meditation, Dharma Yoga
Contemplative	Jnana Yoga: Reflective and Receptive meditation.
Creative	Auto-hypnosis and Affirmation
Devotional	Nada Yoga
Noetic	Raja Yoga
Developmental	Mantra Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, Guru Kripa Yoga
Attunement	Agni Yoga

If you don't learn these methods with us, learn them. Apply them. Reap the results of blessings in your life and in the lives of others. Make meditation a crucible of dynamic and effective change that improves your life in countless ways.

## **The 14 Stages of Raja Yoga Meditation Training**

By George A. Boyd © 2005

Mastery of Raja Yoga is gained through a series of successive stages. These four stages of this process — the preparatory stage, the activation stage, the intermediate stage, and the advanced stage—are listed below. We will briefly discuss these stages and how they ultimately fuse with Agni Yoga/Attunement meditation create the initiating Adept.

### *Preparatory Stage*

1. External Tratakam (focusing attention on external objects)
2. Internal Tratakam (focusing attention on internal foci)

*Activation Stage*

3. Purusa Dhyān (focusing attention on the attentional principle)
4. Surat Dhyān (focusing attention on the spirit)
5. Manasa Dhyān (focusing attention on a nucleus of identity)
6. Atma Dhyān (focusing attention on the ensouling entity)

*Intermediate Stage*

7. Direct Projection of the attentional principle using spatial coordinates (Master Course and AMP)
8. Direct Projection of the attentional principle using alternate paths (Advanced Course)
9. Direct Projection of the attentional principle with directed study of the seed atoms of the vehicles of consciousness, the nodal points on the Path of the ensouling entity, the Nadamic tones of the channels of the Nada, and the nuclei of identity activated within the conscious sphere. (Correspondence Course)
10. Direct Projection of the attentional principle with directed study of the unconscious zones of the mind behind the vehicles of consciousness, and the unawakened sections of the Soul's and spirit's paths. (Correspondence Course)

*Advanced Stage*

11. Reception of the Light of Attunement and radiation of that Light to other ensouling entities (Light Sitzings)
12. Reception of the Light of Attunement and radiation of that Light through the five fundamental attunements to the personality (Teacher Training One)

13. Reception of the Light of Attunement, and radiation of that Light through the seven major attunements, which confer initiation on others (Accepted Discipleship, Empowered Teacher)
14. Becoming the Source of the Light of Attunement as an anointed lineage holder, and sending the beam of attunement to others

### The Preparatory Stage

In the preparatory stage, the aspirant is first trained to focus attention on a series of external objects. When the aspirant can successfully hold his or her mind one-pointedly upon the external object through steady gaze (tratakam), the Raja Yoga teacher shows the meditation student how to bring the attention within.

*This inversion of attention from the external world viewed by the senses to the inner realm of the mind is crucial to the more advanced practices of Raja Yoga.*

This inversion of attention goes through a progressive deepening from the gross phase, to the subtle phase, to the subtler phase, and to the subtlest phase. This progression is shown below with typical visualizations used in external Raja Yoga meditation.

Gross phase object	Subtle	Subtler	Subtlest
Black rounded stone or stone lingam	The Self	The Soul	The Supracosmic Soul
Stone statue of a Deity or Murthi	Vision of the Deity within a chakra of the Subconscious mind	Vision of the Deity in the Cosmic Sphere	Vision of the Deity in the Supracosmic Sphere

Gross phase object	Subtle	Subtler	Subtlest
A sacred symbol (AUM symbol, the cross, the star of Davis, etc)	The concept of the symbol within the intellect (symbol as idea)	The encounter with the symbol in the Superconscious Mind (symbol as archetype)	The encounter with the symbol within the universal field, animating a world religion or culture (symbol as Divine Idea)
A lotus flower or rose	A chakra of the Subconscious mind	A chakra of the Soul's vehicle (Atma Swarup)	A universal chakra of the Planetary, Cosmic or Supracosmic Sphere
The sound of a spoken mantra (AUM vibration) and its resonant overtones	The AUM vibration within the medulla center of the Subconscious mind	The AUM vibration within the medulla center of the Soul's vehicle	The Cosmic AUM, filling all Creation
A candle flame	The light of the attentional principle in the pituitary center of the Subconscious mind	The Light of the Spirit shining within the Soul	The Light of Liberation (Nirvana, Paranirvana, Mahaparinirvana)
The feet of the Guru	The feet of the radiant guide form of the Guru on the inner Planes	The feet of the Guru as spiritual form	The Lotus Feet Center, upon which the ensouling entity unfolds
The physical form of the Guru	The astral, radiant guide form of the Guru	The Guru's immortal form on a higher Plane	The Guru's ensouling entity—the Guru's essence of Mastery

Gross phase object	Subtle	Subtler	Subtlest
A clear vase	The altar center of the Christ Child nucleus of identity of the First Planetary Initiation	The Astral Soul	The spiritual heart on the T3 Path
The sun disk	The Solar Angel of the Second Planetary Initiation	The Sun of Mind in Trikuti (the origin of the mind on the T2 path)	Satchitananda, the ensouling entity of T7
A black point on a white wall	The Manasic Vortex center of the Third Planetary Initiation	The Cosmic Will Center, source of the supernormal powers or siddhis	The Divine Word center, the power of the Guru that empowers the initiatory mantra

This moving from the seen to the unseen is the basis of meditation upon "correspondences." This involves finding the subtle counterparts of representational physical objects, and then contemplating them.

*Internal focusing* begins by contemplating centers of the Conscious and Subconscious mind. Vipassana or mindfulness practices typically focus on the awareness of present time experience of the Conscious mind. More advanced focusing may contemplate the chakras of the Subconscious mind.

This internalized focusing leads to the next step, the activation stage.

### *The Activation Phase*

The activation phase awakens a spiritual essence within the meditator. Depending on how the attention is focused, it may awaken the attentional principle, the spirit, a nucleus of identity, or an ensouling entity. Initiatory ceremonies (diksha) or the revealing of sacred mysteries contain within them the kernel of activating one or more of these of these essences.

For example:

- The mystery of the crucified Christ and His Resurrection veils the Christ Child nucleus of identity of the First Planetary Initiation.
- The giving of a contemplative mantra (Naam) connects the attention with the spirit on the Path through a process of remembrance (simran).
- Contemplating the attentional principle directly (Purusa Dhyana) activates it, awakening the faculties of intention and metavisual sight.
- Giving a centering mantra on the breath (Ajapa Japa) reveals the ensouling entity.

Once the aspirant has had one or more of these essences awakened, he or she is ready to begin progressing on the path that the spiritual teacher has revealed.

### *The Intermediate Phase*

Many spiritual traditions do not continue to train the aspirant in the inner aspects of Raja Yoga. Instead, they develop the spirit through Nada Yoga, the ensouling entity through Mantra Yoga or Guru Kripa Yoga, awaken the vehicles of the Superconscious mind through Kundalini Yoga, or unfold a nucleus of identity through Kriya Yoga or other transformative practices.

In traditions that do unite the attention with the attentional principle, they may sometimes refer to this as the enlightened state, and advocate that their meditation students remain focused in this state of present time awareness. They do not go to the next steps, which are direct projection, and study of the vehicles of consciousness and the stages of the path.

**Direct Projection** shows how to project the attentional principle in full consciousness onto the inner Planes, and to witness the ensouling entity. As the aspirant can demonstrate this faculty at will, he or she prepares to establish a disciplic relationship with a Master teacher.

**Learning other ways to project the attentional principle** [for example, through the vehicles of consciousness one by one] readies the disciple-in-preparation to expand his or her abilities to study consciousness. Detailed examination of the vehicles of consciousness, the nodal points of the Soul's Way, and the Nadamic tones of the spirit's path follow this broadening of the attentional telescope.

### *The Advanced Phase*

**Attunement meditation** uses the faculty of intention of the attentional principle. Up to this point in the disciple's preparation, the work has emphasized contemplation and self-study. The introduction of the advanced phase work is an empowerment of the disciple to minister the Light of Spirit to others. This Light, once received by the meditator in attunement, is in turn sent out to others by intention.

*Attunement meditation emphasizes sending the Light of Spirit to others by intention. This intention is first directed to the ensouling entity of others, and later, directed to the personality.*

At the culmination of the disciple's training, the capacity to give one or more of the seven sacred attunements is conferred. At this stage, the disciple becomes an initiator in his or her spiritual tradition. These seven sacred attunements are:

- 1) Kundalini Yoga
- 2) Nada Yoga
- 3) Mantra Yoga
- 4) Raja Yoga

- 5) Guru Kripa Yoga or Kriya Yoga
- 6) Jnana Yoga
- 7) Agni Yoga

Students who have taken the Mudrashram® Master Course in Meditation will recognize these sacred attunements as the seven mudras, the seven sittings given in the course of this class.

When the disciple has progressed to the same stage as the Initiate supervising his or her spiritual progress, he or she becomes the Way and the Path, and becomes empowered to empower others.

We suggest aspirants study these stages of Raja Yoga training so they may understand the work that must be done on the Life Consciousness Pole. Mastery of Raja Yoga brings the ability to become an instrument of the Living Light, an initiator and awakener of others.



What are the most common types of meditation that you do? Do you need to alter this emphasis of your meditation to work on other areas that have been neglected?

Where are you in the progressive mastery of Raja Yoga? Which areas are you able to do readily? Which areas need more work?

What might you do to improve these areas of your Raja Yoga practice that you need to augment?

Thank you for attending our webinar today!

