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Universal Meditation

by Dr. Zhi Gang Sha

Master Sha will appear November 4, 2006 at the 32nd Annual Yoga Research Society Conference

Millions of people worldwide meditate daily. Some practice well-known meditations that have been passed down through the centuries, while others concentrate on techniques for developing specific abilities. Although meditation is a personal experience, practitioners and researchers have long known the benefits of meditation on health and healing.

What is the secret behind meditation? The answer can be given in two words: creative visualization. However, *how* you practice creative visualization can make a world of difference. Whether a particular meditation originated in China, India, Tibet, North America, or anywhere else, it most likely will fall into one of two categories: *open-style* meditation or *closed-style* meditation.

In open-style meditation, the intention or focus of the mind is *outside* the body. Close your eyes and visualize the moon. Imagine the moon in the heavens among the stars. It is a beautiful full moon, and you can talk to it: *Dear soul, mind, and body of the moon, I love you. Could you give me a blessing? I am honored. Thank you so much.*

Continue visualizing the moon. Now it is so big and so close that it seems you can almost touch it. Feel the moon's light shining on your face and body. You are grateful for this nourishment from the moon.

In this example of open-style meditation, you visualized the moon, but its image remained outside your body; you did not bring the image inside it. In open-style meditation, you can use your mind's eye to visualize anything you like – a forest, an ocean, the sun, a bouquet of roses, a volcano erupting – but the images and visualizations stay outside you.

The advantage of open-style meditation is that it is very creative and active. You can visualize anything you want, but because the images are outside your body, this style of meditation does not build inner power very fast.

In closed-style meditation, the mind is focused *inside* the body or on a specific part of the body. You visualize and focus on the body's

five main energy centers, chakras, internal organs, systems, or cells.

For example, visualize your heart. Concentrate and see it beating with great vigor. Nourish it by bathing it in bright red light. All the heart tissues, muscles, compartments, and blood cells glow bright red. Chant to your heart: *Healthy heart, healthy heart, healthy heart...*



Because the images you are focusing on are inside your body, closed-style meditation develops inner energy faster than open-style. The disadvantage is that it is not a very flexible technique; it lacks creativity because there is a tendency to fixate on only one image. Creative thinking is much more powerful than logical thinking. Another problem is the dry-pot syndrome that can arise if you concentrate too much on a specific area. This is a phenomenon discovered by Taoist practitioners long ago as they concentrated on building the Lower Dan Tian, in the lower abdomen. If you focus your meditation excessively on a specific area, you will start to feel heat there. If you continue to focus on that organ or energy center, the heat can produce a dry, uncomfortable feeling akin to burning a dry pot. In extreme cases, this feeling will persist, even after you stop meditating. This indicates a serious imbalance of yin and yang and can lead to physical and other problems.

Because open and closed styles of meditation both have their drawbacks, the best type of meditation combines both styles. It retains the advantages of each but avoids their

disadvantages. I call this third kind of meditation the open/closed style.

The open/closed style of meditation is a very deep and advanced technique. The principle is to visualize images of nature and of the universe *within* specific areas of your body, such as the body's five main energy centers, the chakras, major internal organs, or wherever you need healing. This style of meditation is characteristic of Soul Mind Body Medicine.

Previously we visualized the moon and the heart in separate meditations. When you focused on the image of the moon outside your body, you were practicing open-style meditation. When you concentrated *inside* your body on your heart, you were practicing closed-style meditation. You can combine these two examples to practice the open/closed style of meditation by visualizing the moon *in* your heart, nourishing and healing it.

Let me give you another example of open/closed meditation. This time you will visualize the sun in your abdomen. Close your eyes and say "hello" to the sun: *Dear soul, mind, and body of the sun, I love you. Could you come to my Snow Mountain Area? Shine your light and give me a blessing for my Snow Mountain Area. Thank you so much.* The Snow Mountain area is a fist-sized energy center located in front of the base of the spine. Also known as the kundalini, it is a foundation energy center that nourishes the kidneys, the brain, and the Third Eye.

If your Third Eye is open, you will instantly see a bright golden sun shining over a mountain of snow inside your abdomen. Steam rises as the hot sunlight melts the snow. If your Third Eye is not open, just imagine a very hot sun melting a huge mountain of snow inside your abdomen. Visualize sunlight shining, radiating, and nourishing your Snow Mountain Area. Chant *sunlight, sunlight, sunlight, sunlight...* for as long as you wish to receive the sun's blessing.

Excerpted from
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“As a Lamp in a spot sheltered from the wind does not flicker”–even such has been the simile used for a Yogi of subdued mind, practicing concentration in the self.

Srimad Bhagavad Gita

The 32nd Annual Yoga Research Society Conference November 4 & 5, 2006

at Thomas Jefferson University Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust St., Philadelphia, PA



Dr. Zhi Gang Sha
SOUL MIND BODY MEDICINE
Learn how to access the power of the soul to heal, transform, and offer divine blessings for any aspect of life.



Dr. Bill Benda
HARMONY THROUGH INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE
Explore natural selection versus intelligent design in the world of Integrative Medicine.

A weekend of extraordinary insights and practices for healing the mind, body and soul.



Dr. S.K. Ramesh
TACHYON ENERGY: EXPERIENCE INTEGRATION
Learn how to harness energy from air, water, food, sleep and the environment to prevent and treat disease.



Dr. Vijayendra Pratap
HARMONY OF CLASSICAL YOGA
This program will include traditional Yoga postures, breathing techniques, relaxation and meditation practices, and a discussion of Classical Yoga.



Master FaXiang Hou
QIGONG ENERGY
Practice breathing techniques, meditations and movements that aid healing and balance the energy of meridians and organs.



Dr. Virender Sodhi
AYURVEDIC HEALING
Find out how the principals and practices of Ayurveda, “the science of life,” help to achieve optimal well being by living in harmony with nature.



RASA
LIVE IN CONCERT
Kim Waters and Hans Christian present their unique Vedic devotional love songs woven into music of unearthly beauty.
Saturday Evening, 8:15



Dr. James D'Angelo
THE HEALING POWER OF THE HUMAN VOICE
Discover how to use the human voice to stimulate, release and balance the fine energies that create wholeness of spirit, mind and body.

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