

Class 5 - Learning to learn

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I rested on the Spirit of the Lord, and She lifted me up to heaven - *Odes of Solomon*

Goals

In class 5 you will:

- Learn to learn - with wisdom, effectively and efficiently
- Explore your meditation lifestyle. Your path. Your teacher
- Design better life directions by focusing on meaningful, rather than urgent, thought-patterns
- Continue your regular, daily meditation practice in your special meditation place

"It is impossible for a man to be cheated by anyone, but himself." -EMERSON

Learning to learn

A valuable person is one who believes that he/she can do anything. With no fear of new tasks there is enormous potential and the possibility to learn quickly, quietly and efficiently. This is the basis of 'Positive Learning' and lies at the heart of a meditation lifestyle.

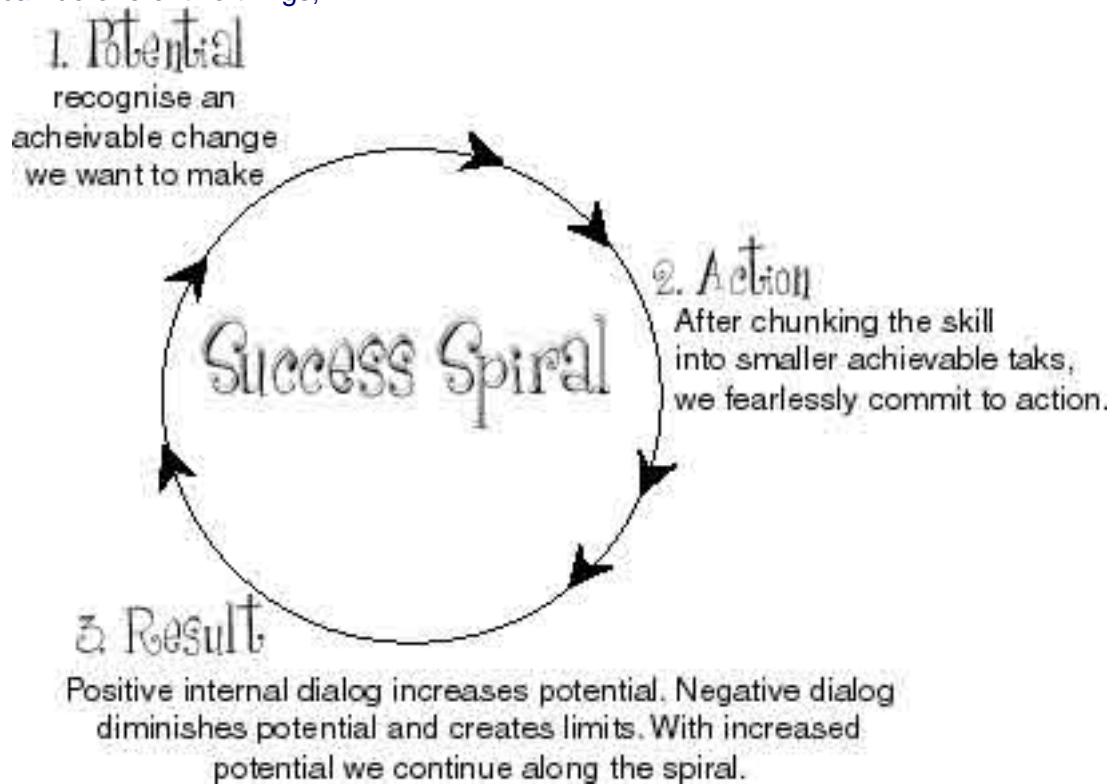
'Positive Learning' utilises 'chunking' or designing a simple step-by-step process that paces a skill into smaller achievable tasks. For example if you were learning to play the guitar, you might begin by learning how to place your fingers on the fretboard for two simple chords. Then with practise you might try a few more, until eventually you would be able to play a complete song.

As we break down our learning process into steps, we find a circular procedure being formed – the 'Success Spiral'.

"My heart needs only one thing: it needs to be guided along the age-old path of life-blossoming self-awareness."

The first step in the Success Spiral is to take personal responsibility for our lives. If there is an element of our lives that we are not happy with, then we can do one of two things;

1. We can defend our present state, lay blame on others or our environment – in which case we 'get what we settle for'. Simply, we extinguish our potential to evolve and diminish our choices. We might find ourselves saying things like - 'Why should I change when it is Betty who has the problem' or 'I will be happy when my husband stops giving me such a hard time'.
2. Or we can accept responsibility for ourselves and live the



adage that all the answers to all of our questions are inside of us. i.e. If I am not happy now, it is because I am not identifying powerfully enough with the infinite joy that is inside my heart, which is my real nature. If I am not being loved now, perhaps it is just as much my responsibility to practise giving love without expectation of any in return and see where it leads.

Do you notice how in the second scenario by positive internal dialog you are empowering yourself, increasing potential and increasing choices?

Once we identify potential for progress then we empower ourselves by releasing the old self we do not want to be and embolden the vision of the new self we are moving towards. This may be as simple as more peace in our lives. We recognise that we do not want to settle for being worried, restless and/or anxious any more. We see that state of mind as the old self we are moving away from and we identify ourselves with how fulfilled, calm and poised we would be if we could develop a regular meditation practise.

Then it is time for Step 2, the action. To obtain more peace, we might try a simple action such as every day in the morning, repeating the mantra “peace” for 3 minutes. The third step is then to engage positive internal dialog to reinforce the action. This increases our potential and empowers our continuing journey along the spiral to ultimate success.

“If your bonds be not broken whilst living, what hope of deliverance in death. It is but an empty dream, that the soul shall have union with Him because it has passed from the body: If He is found now. He is found then. If not, we do but go to dwell in death”. - KABIR

Evolution and the art of change

The most powerful truth about our journey here on the earth is that we are here to evolve and grow. In fact we must - we have no choice about this.

We cannot progress by staying the same. For each step in our evolution a change is required. So let's welcome change. We all know that change creates fear, but let's use our fear, not be imprisoned by it. The adrenaline, the heightened awareness fear gives us, can be transformed into determined and empowering dialog and beliefs that enable us to enact the change.

Many people are dismayed when they first begin to look at themselves truly to find lots of things they would like to change. They often are daunted by the task ahead.

Don't be! The most fantastic gift is the awareness of a change we need to make. Be thankful, most of your work is already done. Consider a model of the change cycle below...

The CHANGE CYCLE

1. Awareness (70%)	To become aware of the problem requires honesty, humility and an open heart. Well done the hard part is over.
2. Willingness (10%)	We must want to change. Without willingness, we are just going to have to keep facing our demons again and again. Remember, the most powerful of all cosmic laws is that we have no choice but to progress. If you find that there is resistance that usually means you have hit upon exactly the problem.
3. Potential (15%)	Free yourself with the empowering belief that you CAN get yourself to do what you want yourself to do. You are not trapped. This stage is all about increasing your potential with extremely positive, empowering internal dialog.
4. Action (2%)	Do you see how ironic this is? The action is really the simple part; it takes only 2% of the total effort. This is where we let go of our anchors (our old binding beliefs or practices) and open ourselves up to the infinite potential of the heart. Remember – repetition, repetition, repetition.
5. Result (3%)	Our analysis of the result of the action is very important. We must as quickly as possible get back to Step 3 and go about the process of offering ourselves the empowerment to increase our potential to the level necessary for the next action.

Our heart is the home of our real self.

During the past two classes we have discussed a higher awareness we experience when our consciousness deepens past the superficial and analytical ‘thinking’ perceptions of the mind to the intuitive experiences we perceive from the

higher mind or 'heart'.

"It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye." -ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPERY

But what and where is the spiritual heart? Close your eyes for a moment. With your index finger, point to yourself while saying 'me'. Where did your finger end up? On your spiritual heart..



As you may have guessed it has nothing to do with the muscle beating away inside your chest. But what are the qualities of the heart? Intuitively, you already know. Take a look at the qualities being expressed in the following statements:

Oh, she's so kind and caring. She has a *heart* of gold!

I love you with all my *heart*.

It absolutely breaks my *heart* to see her suffer like that.

Come on team! We have got to play as one unit, play with *heart*!

I know this is right because I felt it right here in my *heart*.

I thank you from the bottom of my *heart*.

My *heart* is full of joy to see you all here today.

Kindness, love, sympathy, oneness, wisdom, intuition, gratitude and joy - these are the qualities of the spiritual heart. This is exactly why you are meditating on the heart. It is an infinite inner fountain from which flows every positive quality that your real self already possesses. If you walk into a room and light a candle, what happens? The light illuminates the darkness. In exactly the same way, as your heart opens through meditation, the light of your soul will illuminate more and more of your being.

"We must not cease from exploration. And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we began and to know the place for the first time" - T.S. ELIOT

The Meditation Lifestyle - the Path of the Heart.

You may by now, realise that your meditation practise is helping to make meaningful, what were previously, even the most mundane moments in your life.

You may have noticed that you are less likely to respond negatively to situations that previously you may have found yourself 'reacting' in a harmful manner without thinking.

You may also be aware that you are finding yourself more understanding and sympathetic to those around you, that you are more loving, more peaceful and that you are making your decisions with more clarity than ever before.

You may have also found that you have more time, that you are more relaxed, less stressed and more in control. Finally, you may have come to glimpse your real nature, the infinitely loving, peaceful, blissful and wise self that is the real you. With this new found insight, you may have also expanded upon your belief in yourself, realising that ultimately, all the answers to all of your questions are inside of you.

This is the essence of real freedom. The process of letting go of our animal and human natures and expanding and growing into our divine nature. The journey of giving up the earth and embracing heaven, of finding our intimacy with the Supreme, of discovering the Path of the Heart.

There are many paths, but to travel the fastest we must carry the lightest load and with the most intense longing. Our spiritual lives are not measured in the years, but in the moments. That is, it is important for us to start, and while we hear the inner voice to follow it – with all of our heart. If we ignore it, it will teach us more infrequently and its volume will be diminished, if we trust our selves, it will teach us more often and increase its volume.

Many of us have had the experience of facing this spiritual dimension before. We have come to this very same question before. It is now time to live it, to follow the breath of infinity within our hearts, to converse silently and sacredly with our eternal friend inside us, our own highest self, our Supreme.

The goal, plainly, is to focus as much of our energy as possible on our divine nature.

All of us know subconsciously that fulfilment in our lives comes from this cosmic spiritual energy, the love that flows in the hearts of all things. This love we experience as a gateway to the divine, a direct opening to the Supreme. It is all encompassing, all-powerful and infinitely satisfying.



As our society has externalised its search for quality of life and meaning it has tried to externalise even this energy. It has tried to position love in human terms; human relationships, romance, family, material possessions – but this love is only a tiny portion of the whole divine magnificent experience.

Real love is much larger than the normal human love we all know.

Human love is nearly always conditional. "I will love you as long as you love me in return," we will think if we do not say. Most of us have very little understanding of the vast, unconditional compassionate love that is experienced in divine love.

When love first happens, the two individuals are giving each other energy unconsciously and unconditionally and both people feel buoyant and elated. That's the incredible high we all call being in love. Unfortunately, once they expect this feeling to come from the other person, they cut themselves off from the energy in the universe and begin to rely even more on the energy from each other-only now there doesn't seem to be enough.. At this point the relationship degenerates into the usual power struggle.

- James Redfield -*Celestine Prophecy*

As James Redfield points out, it is when love is confined to the narrow boundaries of human, conditional love that it is then prone to a kind of power struggle, between competing participants. We might wonder about the euphoria we felt at the start of the relationship (where we were giving ourselves unconditionally) and blame our partner, believing that we haven't changed – so it must be them. We might try to force them to be something they can't be. Putting it on them to be more romantic, or more loving, when what we really want is that experience of both parties giving of each other without expectation of a return. We need to free ourselves from the binding conditional love and expand our experience into the divine, unconditional love that flows through every atom. To practise loving unconditionally (remember very few of us have experienced it) and become more conscious of that wonderful energy every second.



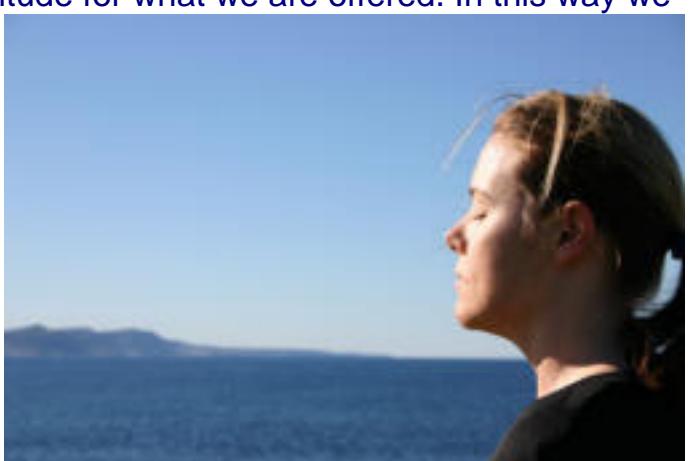
This increased awareness is true even of our diet. What we put into our bodies directly effects our state of mind. If we want our mind to be calm and peaceful, allowing our spiritual energy to come forward than it is helpful if the foods that we consume be nutritious and peacefully produced. Eating on the run, eating without paying attention is not conscious. Meditation is about becoming conscious, becoming aware.

"Nothing will benefit human health and increase the chances for survival of life on Earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet." - EINSTEIN

It has been noted that meat carries with it somewhat powerfully some of the animal consciousness, while a vegetarian diet will effect the seeker in a much more limited way. Ideally though, the food we eat should give us joy and we should offer our gratitude for what we are offered. In this way we can eat more consciously.

In the end, it is one's own happiness, peacefulness and evolution that must be the guide.

"It is only the thought that we are not free, that keeps us from actually being free. Merely to break that thought would be enough to put us into samadhi. Samadhi is not something we have to acquire - we have it already." -Paramahansa Yogananda



Exercise 5

Ocean Oneness

Prepare for your meditation as usual

For this exercise you will need to travel to your favourite beach. If you can't be there physically, visualise it, perhaps with the aid of some nice, ambient ocean music.

For hundreds and thousands and even millions of years the ocean has done this.

It has breathed against the shores of country after country.

Shaping the crevices and caves and cliffs, smoothing the sands, exposing and carving the rocks for the myriads of life forms that evolved and found just the nutrients necessary for them to grow and thrive.

As you sit there, feel that you are listening to the heartbeat of the universe, the life breath of the earth.

Feel the beauty and majesty of the ocean rising from all around you.

Notice that the air is thick with the spray and fragrance of the ocean.

As you breath in – feel yourself breathing in the outgoing breath of the ocean.

Imagine you are breathing in the purest and most essential ingredient of life itself.

This is the original birth mother of all life on earth.

And as you breathe you are merging with the ocean.

You are feeling that there is a place, here in this moment, that is beyond time.

A place beyond cause and effect and why's and how's.

A place beyond space itself.

A place where you just be.

Be.

Be, in the heart of all things, for here creation dwells, and you are one with it all, as life is created even now.

To listen to Exercise 5 click here ([to save to your computer just right click and select "save target as" or "save link as"](#)) [any problems click here](#)

Summary

During this fifth class you will have;

- Learnt about positive learning
 - * Empowering yourself with your infinite potential – your belief is your power.
 - * Acting without expectation - Hesitation gives power to your doubt and fears; be sure and determined.
 - * Look for answers to your questions, in your dreams, your meditation, and the events of your life.
 - * Remember positive internal dialog to increase potential (Remember to say - YET!) - Negative dialog decreases potential, creates limits
- Begun a meditation lifestyle.
 - * Trust your heart. It is your teacher.
- Continued your meditation journal. Perhaps reflecting on your progress so far.