



# Concentration

## A prerequisite for Focused Meditation

"It is better to determine before you sit down exactly what you will do, and then say to yourself quite definitely: "I am going to turn my mind to such and such a thing for a quarter of an hour, and I have no concern with anything else in the world during that time." Picture yourself as doing it before you begin.

*'Concentration' - An Approach to Meditation by Ernest Wood*

### Working reflectively with a seed thought

A first requirement for developing the art of thinking is to pay close attention to the actual *process* of thinking, for example to notice immediately when its course begins to deviate as a result of either emotional reactions or preconceived mental attitudes, or - as is frequently the case - in response to the process of mechanical association, which carries the mind through a series of allied subjects to a point far from the starting place.

The second requirement is *persistence* - in thinking *through*. Here some rather curious things happen. At first, after a few minutes of reflective thinking, we are sure the subject has been exhausted, that there is nothing left to think about it. But if we persist through this blank period and continue to reflect, we begin to discover other unrealised aspects; we may even find that what appeared at first to be a dearth of content is, in fact, an over-abundance . . .

*First Course in Training in Group Creative Meditation: Set 2, page 10*

### A way to begin working with a seed thought:

- ❖ Take a large piece of paper
- ❖ Something to write with, you may prefer to use colours especially if images arise
- ❖ A quiet place to work for 10 - 15 minutes
- ❖ Do this exercise daily or 3 - 4 times regularly for at least one week. Over time working gradually up to 1 month with any one seed thought.

Write the seed thought that you have selected on the paper.

Think about the entire phrase or take a single word or part of the phrase, and ponder on it - try to understand it, consider its implications. Think it through in terms of right relations and goodwill.

Write down any thoughts and ideas that come to you.

Return to the original phrase and consider it again, from the same or a different angle.

Note down any new considerations.

Carry on pondering in this way for a few minutes. If you notice that your mind has wandered from the task, gently bring your attention back to the original phrase or word that you have chosen to work with.

Finally, review what you have written down.

Notice if anything in particular holds or draws your attention.

Can you write this theme in a sentence to share with others?

You may like to take this summarised statement of your considerations into a creative meditation.

It is recommended that you work with a chosen seed thought for at least 7 days or 1 month. If at anytime you find that you have exhausted all your ideas on the theme you may find reading around the subject helpful. Using a dictionary or thesaurus to look up key words may also stimulate you into developing new thought patterns.

Take note of your progress or resistances. Be sure to do this non-judgementally by adopting the role of a loving impartial Observer.

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