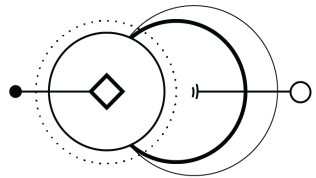


Primordial Sound Meditation

Guidelines For New Meditators



BE HERE WELL

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Dear friend,

The Chopra Center for Well-Being is dedicated to creating programs that bring fulfilment to life. In our experience, the expansion of consciousness through meditation provides the foundation for better health, more loving relationships, greater success, unconditional peace, and spiritual awakening.

Meditation takes us beyond the mental prison of doubt, anxiety, and judgement to the silent field of expanded awareness in which we remember our essential nature as peaceful, centred, and creative. Just a few minutes a day allows us to experience wholeness in our lives, which supports balance, healing, and transformation.

In this world of turbulence and stress, meditation offers access to an inner sanctuary of quiet, centred awareness. From this platform, you will be better able to make life-affirming choices that benefit your emotional and physical well-being.

It will help you expand your internal reference point, so that little by little you will remember your essential nature as infinite and eternal. You will come to know that the universe within you is as vast as the universe

We would like to personally welcome to this course in *Primordial Sound Meditation*, and we wish you joy and fulfilment in everything you do.

“Anyone who has a speck of self-awareness is heading, however halting, towards unified consciousness.”

Deepak Chopra

Congratulations on beginning this course of instruction in *Primordial Sound Meditation* and taking your next step towards a lifetime of fulfilment.

As you begin this journey, take a moment to reflect on all the events that contributed to bring you here. Notice the series of synchronicities that influenced your choice to take this course

As you briefly recapitulate the path that brought you here, become aware of that aspect of your being that is the ever-present witness to all your experiences and choices. People, circumstances, situations, and things are perpetually transforming in life, and there is an aspect of you that is quietly observing the changes. This aspect, this field of awareness, is the real you.

Through meditation, you will become increasingly conscious of your higher self, which is silent, whole, creative, and blissful. Your higher self wants you to make choices that bring peace, health, love, and meaning to your life.

During this course, your instructor will guide you through all aspects of primordial sound meditation. You will receive the mantra or sound that has been selected specifically for you, and you will discover how to effortlessly integrate meditation into your daily routine. You will gain an understanding of the variety of experiences you may have in meditation and the benefits you will notice in your life if you practice it regularly. In the last session, we will explore a vision of the higher state of consciousness that unfolds through the regular practice of *Primordial Sound Meditation*.

Although meditation is not an intellectual process, it is important to have a thorough understanding of the techniques and anticipated effects. This guide book will help you integrate the information in the course. Please feel free to make any notes of your own so that this guidebook will serve as a reference source for the main points of the course.

The only rule in *Primordial Sound Meditation* is to be comfortable and natural. We sit comfortably, we practice it comfortably, and our experiences and results unfold naturally. Your instructor is here to serve as your guide. Please ask any questions that arise. In just a few days you will be successfully practising *Primordial Sound Meditation* and begin to benefit from the expansion of awareness and the increasing inner relaxation it brings.

Welcome again, and enjoy yourself during this course.

Course structure

Your *Primordial Sound Meditation* course will be taught over four sessions. You may wish to record the dates and times of the sessions announced by your teacher in the introductory session.

Session 1:

Introduction

In this introductory session, your instructor will introduce you to the principles of meditation in general and *Primordial Sound Meditation* in particular. you will learn about the history of the technique and how individual mantras are chosen. This is an opportunity to ask any questions before proceeding with personal instruction.

Session 2:

Personal instruction

At your appointed time, you will meet individually with your meditation instructor to receive your personal mantra and learn how to use it properly. Your teacher will begin with a short Sanskrit teaching chant in preparation for giving you the mantra. Once you receive your mantra, you will meditate with your teacher for a few minutes, until your teacher is satisfied that you understand the procedure.

Personal instruction in meditation is a special occasion. We recommend that you come rested and allow sufficient time for your appointment. Avoid any non-prescription psychoactive drugs for at least one week prior to your instruction so that your mind is as clear as possible when you experience your first meditation.

The benefits of meditation come through practice. We will encourage you to take time to practice your *Primordial Sound Meditation* at home each morning and evening for about half an hour in preparation for the next class so that the new information will be useful and relevant.

Session 3:

Perfecting Your Practice Of Meditation

In this session, you will learn the practical aspects of meditation - How to sit, when to meditate, the types of experiences to expect, and what they mean. At the end of this class, your teacher will lead a group meditation so that you can have the experience of meditating with other people. The information you will learn in this session forms the basis of your future successful practice of meditation.

Note: sometimes teachers may combine sessions 3 and 4. In the single extended session, the entire body of information will be provided.

Session Four:

A Vision of Higher State of Consciousness

In this final session of the course, you will discuss the experiences that are possible as you continue with a regular practice of meditation, and discuss the seven levels of consciousness available to human beings. There will be plenty of time to ask questions and receive answers.

To successfully learn *Primordial Sound Meditation*, it is important that you attend all of the sessions. If your schedule prevents you from attending any of them, we suggest that you wait and take the course when you have time to participate fully. Learning the basic principles of meditation now will serve you throughout your life.

Session 1

Introduction

Meditation is a technology that benefits body, mind, and soul. Through inner exploration, meditation awakens creativity, healing, and transformation. We spend most of our lives looking outward to the world of form and phenomena, believing that the source of happiness, peace, and fulfilment lies external to ourselves. During meditation, we expand our internal reference point from local to non-local, from constricted to expanded awareness, from a skin-encapsulated ego to a field of ever-present witnessing awareness. Meditation allows us to explore our essential nature, restoring the memory of wholeness in our lives.

Meditation is not about forcing your mind to be quiet; rather, it's a process of re-discovering the quietness that's already there. Behind the screen of our internal dialogue is the silence of pure awareness – a silence that is not disturbed by thoughts of the past or concerns for the future.

Primordial Sound Meditation is derived from the yoga tradition of India. *Yoga* means union - The union of environment, senses, body, mind, and soul. The union is described in an ancient text known as the yoga sutras, written by the sage Patanjali. The first lines of the yoga sutras state that yoga is the progressive settling down of the mind into the field of pure silence, which is usually overshadowed by the activity of the mind. **When, through meditation, we are able to access the silent spaces between thoughts, we enter into the field of unbounded awareness.**

The silence you experience in meditation is in the “gap” between your thoughts. Glimpsing this field of quiet, expanded awareness allows you to recognise that your essential self is not the perpetual traffic of thoughts that fill your mind, but the silent witness to your thoughts, words, and actions. Regular practice of primordial Sam meditation helps establish inner quietness in your life, providing access to creativity and enabling you to make life-affirming choices.

Past actions (karma) create memories (sanskaras), which generates desires (vasanas), which in turn lead to new actions. The seeds of these memories and desires are present at the level of our soul. It is this “software of the soul” that propels each of us to make choices that define our lives. Meditation helps us recognise that we are capable of making conscious choices that enable us to experience greater peace, love, and success.

“The memory of perfection cannot be lost.”

Deepak Chopra

Meditation: The Antidote To Stress

Any time we encounter resistance to the fulfilment of our needs and desires, our minds and bodies become activated. Any threat to our safety, happiness, or self-esteem provokes a cascade of physical and emotional reactions. This stress response, sometimes known as “fight–or–flight”, arises from a primitive part of the brain and is designed to ensure our survival.

During the fight-or-flight response, a number of physiological changes occur that prepare the body to respond aggressively to a perceived threat, including:

- Raised heart rate and blood pressure
- Faster breathing
- Stress hormone release
- Shifting blood circulation away from digestion to muscles
- Sweating
- Stickier blood clot in cells (platelets)
- Weakened immunity

If the challenge is life-threatening, these bodily changes are useful, but if the threat is more psychological, the regular activation of the fight-or-flight response can weaken our health.

Acute stress symptoms

- ↑ Increased blood pressure
- ↑ Stress hormone release
- ↓ Circulation to the digestive tract
- ↑ Sticky platelets
- ↓ Decreased immunity

Chronic stress symptoms

- Coronary heart disease
- Anxiety, insomnia, addictions
- Digestive disturbances
- Heart attacks, strokes
- Infections, cancer

During meditation, the body shifts into a state of restful awareness, which is counterbalancing to the fight-or-flight response. During meditation we experience:

- ↓ Decreased heart rate
- The normalisation of blood pressure
- ↓ Quiet breathing
- ↓ Reduced stress hormones
- ↓ Reduced sweating
- ↑ Strength and immunity

Regular activation of the restful awareness response has physical and psychological benefits.

We are multidimensional beings

We have a physical body, a subtle body, and a causal body.

We live simultaneously on many levels.

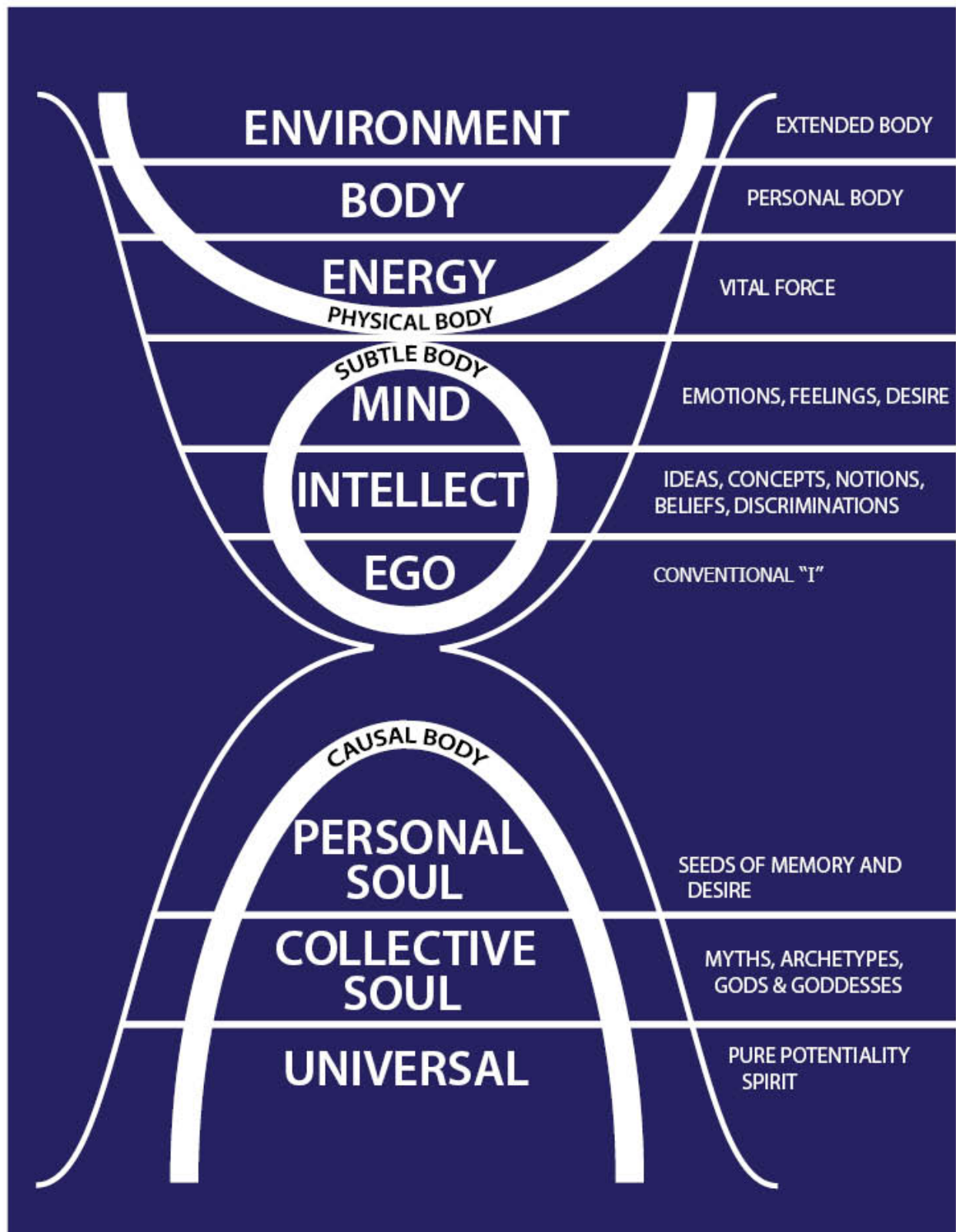
According to the ancient yoga tradition from which *Primordial Sound Meditation* is derived, we are multi-faceted beings. becoming intimate with the various dimensions of our nature enables us to live with vitality, creativity, and happiness.

We have a **physical body**, which is made of matter and energy. It encompasses the environment, our personal molecules, and the life force (Prana) that enlivens the matter of our body. becoming more conscious of the choices we make, and minimising toxicity while maximising nourishment, is key to a healthy body. Meditation helps us make better choices by enhancing our ability to listen to the needs of our body.

Our **subtle body** includes our mind (thoughts, desires, and emotions), our intellect (the choice maker), and our ego (self-image). When our mind and emotions are turbulent, we experience the world as challenging. When our mind and emotions are peaceful, we experience increasing lightheartedness and freedom. **Meditation helps us reduce mental and emotional turbulence.**

Our **causal body** is our underlying field of consciousness, which includes our soul and spirit. when we experience life from the level of our soul, our choices bring us greater happiness, peace, love, meaning, and purpose. Through *Primordial Sound Meditation*, we experience progressively expanded states of awareness, enabling us to remember our essential nature as infinite and eternal.

The Layers Of Life



Primordial Sound Meditation: The Journey To Expanded Awareness

According to Yoga, sound is the subtlest of our experiences, and thoughts are a subtle form of sound. In *Primordial Sound Meditation*, we use sound in the form of mantras to take us on our inward journey. The word **mantra** means instrument or vehicle of the mind. The mantras used in *Primordial Sound Meditation* have no specific meaning and are used only for their sound or vibrational quality. How are usual meaningful thoughts to keep our attention at the level of the mind and intellect. Mantras interrupt the flow of meaningful thoughts, allowing your attention to expand to quieter, more abstract levels of the mind until we eventually slip beyond thought into silence. When the mantra and your thoughts disappear, the only thing left is the one who is thinking the thoughts: the real you.

Mantras are primordial sounds, the basic vibrations of nature. We are surrounded by primordial sounds, such as the wind rustling through the trees, waves breaking on the beach, and the innocent laughter of children. There are mantras in all cultures, used for different purposes. The mantras of *Primordial Sound Meditation* are derived from the Vedic tradition of India and have been used for thousands of years to take the awareness from activity to silence. Your mantra will be selected from about 100 possible sounds.

At its most basic level, everything in the universe is sound or vibration. Thousands of years ago, enlightened sages and seers cognized that the environment has its own specific sounds, which change over time. Using ancient Vedic mathematics, we can identify the vibration of the world at the time and place of your birth. This is the sound the universe was singing when you emerged through the gap into manifest creation. When this sound is incorporated into your mantra, it has the effect of drawing your attention inwards, allowing you to reconnect with the field of your awareness.

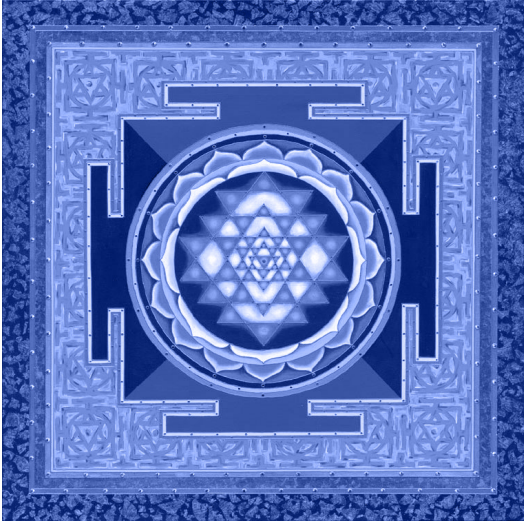
It is important to remember that *Primordial Sound Meditation* is not an intellectual process. In fact, the less you try to control the process, the greater the benefits.

“Know that deep inside you, in the innermost recesses of your heart, are the gods and goddesses of knowledge, love, compassion, and abundance. He is gods and goddesses have only one desire: to be born.”

Deepak Chopra

Session two

Personal Instruction



During your personal instruction session, you will receive your *Primordial Sound Meditation* and the procedure to use it properly. Your meditation instructor will begin the session with a short chant in Sanskrit, thanking previous teachers for sharing this information, generation after generation. We encourage you to sit comfortably and enjoy it. In the instruction room, you may notice the geometric symbol illustrated here, which is known as the Sri Yantra. It represents a state of dynamic balance between the forces of nature and is traditionally used as a visual centring device.

After the chant, your teacher will whisper to you your personal primordial sound mantra and meditate with you for a few minutes. Before you leave, you will receive the mantra in written form to help you remember it. Please keep it private. The session with your teacher takes about 10 minutes, after which you will have your first full half-hour meditation on your own.

During your personal instruction session, we suggest that you limit your questions to those relating directly to the technique. There will be plenty of time during the next sessions for other questions about meditation and its role in life. Feel free to address any questions or concerns about the appropriate use of the mantra with your teacher.

After receiving instruction in meditation we suggest that if at all possible, you take it easy the rest of the day. Take a walk in nature or spend some quiet time with friends or family. Do what you can to make this a memorable day for you.

Before the next session, we strongly encourage you to meditate on your own each morning and evening for about 30 minutes. Remember to sit comfortably each time with your eyes closed. At the next session, your teacher will discuss the practical points of meditation and answer any questions you have about your initial meditation experiences.

Enjoy this special day!

Session 3

Perfecting Your Meditation Practice

We don't usually spend time analysing our practice or experiences during meditation; however, in this session, we are going to do just that. If you start with a good understanding of the basic principles, you will be able to enjoy a lifetime of effortless, successful meditation. Remember, there are no hard and fast rules in *Primordial Sound Meditation*. Use this information and adapt it to suit your lifestyle and schedule.

Your mantra is used for its sound or vibrational quality. It is not important or significant if your mantra reminds you of some other word or name. Let go of any associations. Attaching any meaning to your mantra will hold you on the level of the mind and slow your entry into the gap. If your mantra comes to your mind during the day, gently shift your attention back to whatever you are doing.

Meditate sitting up. Lying down is associated with going to sleep and is not recommended unless you're unable to sit up. Sit in whatever position is comfortable so your attention is not being continually drawn to sensations in your body.

Always close your eyes to meditate. When our eyes are open, our attention is usually drawn outwards, which is contrary to the inward process of meditation. So don't try meditating while walking, driving, or doing other activities.

Whenever possible, meditate in an environment free of disturbances. However, remember that you can meditate anywhere you can sit down and close your eyes. If you are disturbed during meditation, deal with the interruption and then come back and finish whatever time remains.

For maximum benefits, we recommend meditating twice a day for 30 minutes each time. The best times to meditate are first thing in the morning before breakfast, and again in the late afternoon or early evening before dinner. If you can't meditate before eating, allow enough time for your meal to digest. You can engage in light exercise before meditating, but it is better to perform heavy exercise afterwards. As meditation usually makes the mind more alert, it is generally recommended that you do not meditate right before bedtime. Regularity of meditation is very important so if some days you do not have the full 30 minutes, meditate for whatever time you have.

Repetition of the mantra does not require a clear pronunciation. Repeat your mantra in a very gentle, relaxed manner. Any time you feel you are focusing or concentrating on your mantra, stop for a moment, then come back to it more gently. You may notice that your mantra changes during meditation. It may change its rhythm, speed, or volume. It may become distorted. However, if your mantra changes, continue to think it effortlessly, without resisting changes.

From time to time, you may become distracted by thoughts in your mind or noises in the environment. This is a normal part of the process so don't struggle against thoughts. However, any time during meditation that you realise you're not thinking the mantra, gently return to it.

There are basic categories of experiences you can have during meditation, each of which is correct:

1. Repeating the mantra. As you repeat the mantra, you will notice that it is just like a thought except that it has no meaning. repeating this vibration over and over again will not create thought because it is a vibration, not a thought or a word. As you repeat the mantra, it may change. The mantra will become faster and slower, louder and fainter; it may even become jumbled or distorted. However it changes, continue to repeat it innocently without resisting these changes. sometimes you will notice that you are having thoughts at the same time that you are repeating the mantra. When you notice this, just drift back to the mantra.

2. Turbulent thoughts and restlessness. when your mind is turbulent, your body may feel restless. this experience may occur at the beginning of a meditation, or if you have recently been engaged in emotionally charged or mentally intense activities. As you continue meditating, your mind will settle down and your body will relax. Continue your meditation with an easy attitude when you are feeling restless, coming back to your mantra when you realise your attention has drifted away from it.

3. Slipping into the "gap". we refer to the experience of "no mantra, no thoughts" as the gap. Effortless use of the mantra enables you to disengage from the flow of thoughts that is perpetuated through meaning. Because the mantra is a sound that has no meaning, the mind can quiet as the meaningful association is suspended. Because we are not having thoughts while in the gap, we only become aware of this experience after it has happened. We were not asleep, we were not repeating the mantra, and we were not thinking thoughts. For a brief moment we stepped out of space and time into pure awareness.

4. Sleep. If you fall asleep during your meditation, it means your body has accumulated some fatigue and is taking the opportunity of your relaxation and meditation to rest. When you wake up, finish whatever meditation time is left. If you regularly fall asleep during meditation, consider going to bed earlier.

The experiences you have during meditation depend on how your physiology is functioning at that time. Therefore, as long as you are meditating effortlessly, every experience is a good experience. We encourage you not to judge your meditation by the experience as you have during meditation but by the benefits you notice in your life.

"The only bad meditation is the one you don't do"

At the end of your meditation time, stop thinking the mantra, and remain with your eyes closed in silence for two or three minutes. Gently stretch or move, allowing your attention to gradually come back to your environment before getting up.

We encourage you to keep your mantra private, as its purpose is to carry your awareness inward. Although when you first receive meditation instruction, your mantra may come to mind during the day, soon it will be there only when you begin your meditation, serving as a vehicle that takes your mind into expanded state of awareness.

The basic principles of *Primordial Sound Meditation* are simple:

- Think your mantra gently, effortlessly.
- When you become aware that you are not thinking the mantra, gently come back to it.
- Relinquish resistance or anticipation during meditation.
- Meditate for your recommended time twice a day.

“Pay attention to that unchanging part of yourself. It is perfect. At the source of life, one finds peace, harmony, and the undisturbed contentment of bliss.”

Deepak Chopra

Session Four

Higher States of Consciousness

This last session explores the predicted benefits of a regular meditation practice. Human beings are accustomed to living life within limitations, responding in predictable ways to situations, circumstances, people, and events. through the expansion of awareness, we gain access to energy and creativity that opens new possibilities for physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Experiences exist in space and time. Physical objects, including our bodies, have specific locations in space and exist in time - they have a beginning and an end. Our subtle body (mind, intellect, and ego) can't really be said to exist in space, but it does exist in time; that is, our thoughts and emotions have a beginning and an end. However, at the level of the soul, we step beyond space and time into unbounded eternity. Experiences are localised events but the real you, the one who is having the experience, is non-local.

In meditation, when we slip into the gap, we slip into the field of non-local awareness, The field of pure silence and pure potentiality. When we come out of meditation, we bring some of the non-local qualities into our lives. Alternating between local and non-local, between expanded and constricted awareness, we gradually infuse the silence of consciousness into our minds and bodies.

Just as a radio can be used to trap a non-local radio signal at any location and converted into music, our physiology is trap non-local spirit and convert it into the space-time events of our lives. if a radio is not working well, the signal will be received with static. In the same way, if our mind and body are out of balance as a result of stress and toxicity, we are unable to live the full value of conscious awareness. When, through meditation, we quiet our inner turbulence, our thoughts, words, and actions reflect our deepening connection to the creative power of the universe, and our intentions for peace, health, love, and meaning are spontaneously fulfilled.

“Fixed boundaries of space and time are only conveniences of the mind; they are not absolutes.”

Deepak Chopra

Most peoples experiences are limited to the first three states of consciousness:

- 1. Waking** – Most people consider this their normal reality, generated through sensory experiences of the environment. Waking is the every day local state of consciousness in which the world appears solid, structured, and bound by space and time. In this relatively dull state, we perceive ourselves as separate from everyone and everything.
 - 2. Dreaming** – A state in which there is less subject-object split, less localisation of experience, and more flexibility of space-time than in the waking state. In the dream state, we experience the subtle body (mind, intellect, and ego), which ultimately projects as the physical body. The mind has experiences, but upon awakening, we consider dream is to be fabrications.
 - 3. Deep Sleep** – The body is resting while there is very little conscious awareness. A profound level of beingness in which we experience no separation between ourselves and everything else. In deep sleep we consolidate memories, our body renews itself, and our immune system is strengthened.
 - 4. Transcendental Consciousness** – This is the experience of slipping into the gap. This is sometimes referred to as Atma Darshan, meaning “glimpsing the soul.” It is a taste of non-local reality, beyond space and time. In transcendental consciousness, we experience pure awareness rather than awareness of something in particular. This is also where you find a thinker of the thoughts, the real you. The real you, being non-local, cannot be found in the body; it is spaceless and timeless. It was never born and therefore it can never die.
- Through the regular experience of transcendental consciousness in meditation, the memory of timeless awareness remains with us even during deep sleep, dreaming, and wakefulness. The experience of non-local reality begins to exist along with local experience, and three more levels of consciousness gradually become available to us.
- 5. Cosmic Consciousness** – In this state of consciousness, we experience the local and non-local together in our own lives. This is often referred to as a state of witnessing. We are no longer overshadowed by the scenery as we recognise we are playing an infinity of roles.
 - 6. Divine Consciousness** – Progressing further, we now realise that the non-local field of spirit is not only in ourselves but also in everything else in creation. We begin to appreciate everything at its most refined level. We perceive that we inhabit a celestial world, infused with the sacred.
 - 7. Unity consciousness** – Finally we have realisation that, at the level of spirit, we are universal beings disguising ourselves as individualised expressions. The Sanskrit expression for this realisation is *Ahum Brahmasmi* (I am the Universe).

You may already have had glimpses of these higher state of consciousness, and through the regular practice of *Primordial Sound Meditation*, they will eventually, become a permanent reality. It is important, however, not to become attached to the goal. Enjoy the path as the benefits unfold in your life. Look for the spontaneous fulfilment of desires and the experience of meaningful synchronicity.

Although we believe meditation is the single most powerful tool for personal growth, it is important to maintain balance in all areas of your life. Eat a healthy diet, exercise regularly, get enough sleep, and don't take life too seriously.

You made the choice to learn *Primordial Sound Meditation* and we hope you will take the time to make it part of your life. You can think about it, talk about it, and read about it, but unless you do it, you will not experience its bounty.

We encourage you to complete the following meditation journal for the next 2 to 3 weeks before going to bed each night. Each day, record the times you meditated, where you were (at home, in the park, on an aeroplane, etc) and how long you meditated each time. Record the experiences you have during each meditation (fell asleep, lots of thoughts, restless, settled, relaxed, slipping into the gap, etcetera) and the changes you notice in your activity (felt calmer, clearer, more relaxed in a stressful situation, more energy, better relationships, etc.).

At the end of each week, review your progress. Were you able to meditate regularly? Did you notice a difference in your meditation experiences from morning to evening, from one day to the next? Did where you meditate make a difference in the quality of your experience? How did disturbances affect you?

It is normal for your experiences to change from meditation to meditation, and day to day.

We take great pleasure in welcoming you to our family of meditators. We wish you the realisation of all your dreams and look forward to seeing you at our future programs.

"You cannot stand anywhere outside of yourself."

David Simon

Meditation Journal

[illegible]

Meditation Journal

[illegible]

Intentions and desires

Please list your desires in the following categories:

Material (includes health, money, power, success, possessions, et cetera)

Emotional (includes relationships, changes in attitude, ability to get in touch with your true feelings, et cetera)

Spiritual (includes enlightenment, spiritual experiences, the search for God, et cetera)

Please read through your list of desires before each meditation and before going to sleep at night.

Questions & answers

Live in the present, because it is The only moment you have. Keep your attention and what is here and now. Look for the fullness in every moment.

What is the difference between primordial sound meditation and other forms of mantra meditations??

All meditations that make use of the silent repetition of a mantra have a similar goal: to take your awareness beyond thought, into pure silence and pure awareness. The mantras used in *Primordial Sound Meditation* and the way in which they are selected are unique. It is our experience that meditation is a direct path to self-knowledge. We can experience the benefits of meditation without adopting an entirely new belief system.

How long until I notice the benefits of meditation?

The benefits of meditation accrue from our first experience. Each of us grows at our own pace. Some people notice dramatic changes immediately, while for others it may take weeks or months. It is not uncommon for other people to notice changes in you before you do. If you meditate regularly, the benefits will become evident over time.

Do I need to make changes in my lifestyle?

The only change or adjustments you will need to make is to allow time to meditate regularly, twice daily. You don't need to adopt any other behaviour, though you may find that you naturally gravitate towards healthier choices as you continue with your meditation practice.

What is the difference between *Primordial Sound Meditation* and self-hypnosis, visualisation, or prayer?

These practices engage the mind, whereas *Primordial Sound Meditation* is designed to take your awareness to increasingly expanded layers of the mind until you go beyond thinking. Our experiences with people meditating regularly is that whatever other inner practices they engage in, they often report deeper experiences as a result of their expanding inner silence.

Will *Primordial Sound Meditation* cure my health problems?

Meditation is a process for restoring balance, harmony, and the memory of wholeness throughout the mind-body system. Although many people have noticed beneficial changes in their lives meditation should not be regarded as a treatment for any particular health problem.

What should I do to clear my mind of unwanted thoughts during meditation?

Thoughts are a normal part of the meditation process so there is no need to resist them. The mantra itself is just a thought that has no meaning. Think the mantra and, whenever you become aware that you have drifted away to other thoughts, gently come back to it. Practising meditation effortlessly, your thoughts become more refined, and the mantra becomes more refined, until you slip beyond thought, into pure awareness.

How can I avoid being disturbed by noises in my environment?

To meditate you simply need to be able to think a thought, no matter what is happening around you, you continue to have thoughts, and therefore you can experience more refined thinking. Have an attitude of non-resistance and you will find your awareness effortlessly moves in the direction of increasing inner silence.

How do I know if I have slipped into the gap?

You will spontaneously experience times when you recognise in retrospect that your mind was silent and your body was deeply rested. Have an easy attitude towards every experience in meditation. As the turbulence in your mind quiets, you will experience open “no mantra, no thoughts.”

What does it mean when I experience tingling, twitching, or movements in my body during meditation?

As your mind quiets in meditation, your body releases tension. This may be expressed as subtle, involuntary movements. Have an easy attitude with these movements and they will pass. When you realise your attention has been drawn to sensations in your body, gently bring your attention back to the mantra.

Can I meditate more than twice a day?

Under normal circumstances, twice a day is sufficient. You need the experience of meditation alternating with activity to integrate the benefits into your life. Balance is the key to success. However, if you are ill, pregnant, or going through a temporary period of high stress, you can do extra or longer meditations if it's comfortable.

Will I have profound insights when I meditate?

During meditation, we encourage you not to invest any particular importance in the thoughts or ideas you have. When you become aware that you are engaging in thinking something other than

the mantra, gently come back to the mantra. If a particular thought is worthy of your attention, it will be there after meditation.

What should I do if my mantra never seems to change and I don't feel as if I'm going to quieter levels?

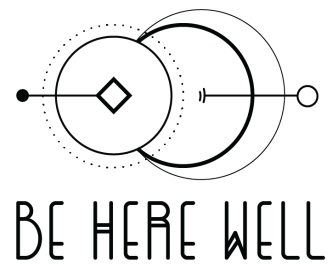
Primordial Sound Meditation does not involve focusing or concentrating. Thinking the mantra is so subtle it's more like listening to it than saying it. Listen to the sound of your mantra and let it come and go as easily as you think other thoughts. Most of your conditioning has been to put effort into everything you do. **meditation is the opposite – the less you do, the greater the rewards.** Don't look for the mantra to change, but as it happens, allow it to occur.

What does it mean when it seems as though my breathing stops during meditation?

This is another way of experiencing slipping into the gap. When our thoughts quiet, our breath also quiets. When we have the realisation that our breathing was very still, we quietly go back to our mantra.

Is there an advantage to meditating with other people?

People often find that meditating in a group supports a deeper experience of quietness. As our awareness expands, we find that an individual's consciousness affects the collective awareness, and collective awareness influences individual consciousness. People meditating together support the expansion of peace in their own lives and in those around them.



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