

Dwelling in Your True Nature — Your Sheaths

One of the highest experiences of meditation is dwelling in your true nature. Normally we're stewing in our emotions or thinking in a thousand directions at a time. Imagine being able to go through your day enjoying and participating in life while being a permanent resident of your true nature.

Where do you live? What do you feel most of the time? What do you think about most of the time? That's where you live. If you're always thinking about your body, or your cancer, that's where your consciousness dwells, that's where you live. If you're always thinking about your lost love or your rising career, that's where you live. If you go through life reaching for one drink after another, you live in addiction. Or perhaps you live in fear or hate. Perhaps most of your life energies are focused on building a better body. Or hating the one you've got. What you think about most and what you feel most often indicate not only where you live but the quality of your life.

A way to greatly assist you in your inventory is a consideration of which *sheaths* you dwell in — or perhaps are trapped in. Sheaths are like veils. In order to progress in the journey of meditation within, you come across several sheaths, or veils, which obscure your way. You have to open, or transcend, each veil in order to see the way ahead and move forward. Through an understanding of your sheaths, you can meditate with great wisdom. You can know whether you are going forward or you can recognize the indicators of being blocked or even going backward.

- 1) Physical Sheath
- 2) Prana / Life-Force Sheath
- 3) Mental / Emotional Sheath
- 4) Buddhi / Higher Mind Sheath
- 5) Bliss / Ecstasy Sheath

How to Practice

First off, sit calmly and watch the flow of your thoughts and feelings for the next ten to fifteen minutes. Just get a general survey of the situation within you. As

you look in your mind, notice whether you have a lot of worries, fears, frustrations. Notice how many happy feelings and memories occur during this period of introspection. Notice how many good thoughts and feelings you have about people — including yourself — as compared to the number of unpleasant, angry, or cynical thoughts and feelings moving within you. You'll be meditating now for a long time. Let's see if you are dwelling in a good and worthwhile state of being.

So, sitting comfortably, watch the flow of your thoughts and feelings and note the general conditions, the general themes and currents of emotion which move within you. How did you do? Are you happy with your flow of awareness? Do you like to live with these thoughts and feelings as your close companions?

Has your flow of awareness changed significantly since you did exercises like this and began your meditations? Do positive thoughts automatically move in and deal with fears and frustrations? When you look at your thoughts and feelings, do you feel that you are loved? And that you are a loving person? Do you find a lot of rejoicing and satisfaction in the memories which come to your mind? Do you find delight and happy expectations when you have thoughts and feelings about tomorrow and the future?

Based on the preponderance of your thoughts and feelings, and their directions in general, where are you dwelling? In what kind of awareness do you make your home? Are you a person of faith or of dread? Are you a person of merit or a loser? How many of your thoughts and feelings are about your pain or your dissatisfactions? Is there a lot of suffering going on in there? Or a lot of hope?

To continue this all-important investigation in order to fully understand where you dwell and start a relocation project if there's a really unhappy, unfulfilled person living in your skin, do several ten to fifteen minute periods of introspection throughout the week. Also, carry a notepad with you and make notes as you go through your day. Being open to this issue of your overall happiness and fulfillment in life, you will find that your thoughts and feelings are happy to reveal themselves vividly and clearly to your interested inquiry. Simply gather information first. Watch your thoughts and feelings in direct circumstances, on different days, and see how much they tell you about where your awareness dwells.

Benefits

After a week or two of this self-study, you can easily determine whether meditation has become a positive, centering, uplifting influence in you and in your life.

Remember, if you don't like what you see, there are remedies and new possibilities for you. On the other hand, if you are thrilled with what you now see occurring in your flows of awareness, just keep meditating and living a more centered life and your present flows of awareness will get better and better as the years go by.