

SEE THE LOTUS

WITHOUT MUD



NO LOTUS

Personally, I don't believe that enlightenment or even salvation are things that are achieved by an 'aha', like a thunderbolt that you get, and never lose. Enlightenment *can* take place in a flash. But this *enlightened connected amazing state of mind* is more like an 'enlightened moment'. I have sympathy for my spiritual friends that feel that are hoping for "it" in their *next* life, or those who minimize the magic of this present life actually looking forward to when they physically die, or to the majority of us who do not truly believe what we can achieve in this moment or lifetime.

People crave enlightenment, including a kind, calm mind and think meditation can help, which it can. We buy books about 'the secret of how', because we want it to be easy. Our 'path of least resistant natures' want to skip the years of commitment and work/training that it takes to truly develop the skill to achieve this, **and it is a skill**. Meditation is an incubation process and training ground for everyday life. It will move you closer to this state of mind than any other one thing, in the opinion of most masters.

It is imperative to shift your attitude to where you believe that everything that you see can be held in awe and appreciation: that's **#1**. Then by practicing, you can notice how you non-productively internally dialogue and judge: that's **#2**. The ability to enact those two is a piece of a journey. When these moments *happen*, you may feel an incredible connective high. We all have felt this.

But, how can we go from having these moments once in a while, to experiencing them regularly? Well, if you are wanting to do it intellectually, you are on the wrong track. "Darn!" So maybe you can begin by knowing that meditation sets up an environment for more enlightening experiences to occur and with more frequency.

This is a famous exchange in the life of the historical Buddha. In front of a crowd, instead of speaking he held up a dripping lotus flower fresh out of the mud in which it grows. The crowd was confused except for Mahakasapa, who broke out into a smile. His comparative mind stopped and he experienced the flower with all of his attention. This flower that grows is in itself beautiful, but has been a metaphor for enlightenment for centuries, partially because of this exchange. The crowd was waiting for words to digest, while the Buddha was trying to find ways to lead them into an enlightening experience. That entails a mind (my/your mind) that is not comparing or thinking: we just see the aliveness and perfection of whatever our attention has settled on.

Another story is about *Quan Yin*, a female personification of compassion. In some depictions, she holds a lotus bloom. Any observer might think "what a beautiful bloom", but in this depiction, there is more. The bloom represents the observer (you). She's inviting you to see yourself as an ever-blooming evolving flower. **YOU ARE THE BLOOM**, and everything you come in contact with is expressing itself and gesturing back to you. Your direct engagement is what brings the world alive.

Everything can be observed in its own light (separately as changing and fleeting), while simultaneously intertwined with everything else. It's a wonderful conundrum. Meditation helps re-solve the conundrum. A settled mind can be referred to as a clear sky, or calm water beneath the surface of a lake where thoughts and things come and go. This field of mind can be felt, but there is no way you can intellectualize or muscle your way there. This mind cannot be found by trying to stop your thoughts.

Meditation invites you to experience both the field and what appears in the field, which is referred to as content. The more you practice going back and forth between field and content, the more imperturbable your mind becomes and the more you can engage with the lotus flower as Mahakasapa did. And you also continue to evolve as the lotus flower lifting its face.

You are the bloom, but everything else is expressing and blooming just like the flower. In hiking the other day, I felt the stones 'were stoning', and the trees 'were treeing'. They were expressing themselves, but **here it is**. Without me observing it as a masterpiece, it is irrelevant. Who cares whether or not a tree makes a sound when there is no one there: that's the point! The observer (us) makes the sound come alive. My engagement with the stone was the key to its expression. It was gesturing to me

Each and every thought and feeling has its own life as well. Sensations blend with sounds and projections to create a cacophony of the contents and context of our minds at any given moment. Field, content, awareness. As all Zen masters shout "WAKE UP".
Namaste

Join us for meditation at [iThrive Yoga](#) on Tuesday 8:15am and Wednesday 8:15pm. Call me to chat at 720 350 1805