

Contemplation, Reflection & Meditation Time

Contemplation... Mmmm. As I sit here reflecting on the different types and levels of “contemplation,” I’m aware that we don’t have the language to describe some of the levels I’d like to explore. With only 26 letters in our alphabet, (which mind you, enables us an inordinate number of words and an exceedingly diverse vocabulary) I find we just don’t have the emotionally descriptive language to express the our deeper experiences and insights... however, let’s give it a go.

So what’s the difference between contemplation, reflection and meditation? Is there difference? ...and what can be gained by it?

To Reflect

Reflecting on something is to take the time to think deeply and carefully about a situation of some kind. There is often a clarity that comes from deep, considered reflection. It could be that you reach some new insight, or a different perspective may bubble up, or a decision may be reached through your deliberation time. You reflect on something that has passed, or is current in your life.

To Contemplate

Contemplating is to think deeply and at length about a situation. Again it could be to make a decision or to examine or study a situation. Reflection and contemplation are very alike and could be interchanged at times, however contemplation can take you into the future as well. You might give deep, considered thought to your future by contemplating different outcomes.

To Meditate

Meditating is different, there can many different reasons why a person might begin meditating. It could be to alleviate symptoms of stress and anxiety. It could be to re-energize the mind and body. It could be to expand spiritually.

In my opinion meditation in its essence is different to reflection and contemplation, in that the person seeks to go beyond thinking, mental images and human concepts to a direct experience with a higher intelligence.

This year on the 3rd of September, I reach my 20th anniversary of daily meditation. Yay!!!! Meditation has given me some extraordinary experiences, insights and perspectives over the last two decades. (*as I have written about in my book "Living Beyond Stress, Anxiety & Overwhelm"*) I have learned so much and I continue to learn.

Words can be so inept; these three words, reflection, contemplation and meditation will have different meanings for different people, so in a way it doesn't really matter what our personal interpretation is. What is important is that we take the time to sit still and go within each day.

Whatever form of meditation you choose to practise, whether you use a mantra, the breath, an open eye visual focus, or any other form... the type, form or structure you use is the "vehicle" you ride on to take you into a "state of meditation". What is important is the state of harmony and stillness you reach. The state of transcendence. It is in this state of alert, deep peace and connectedness that you access and experience "Truth".

When you first start meditating, even though you are sitting quietly, your mind could be very active, even manic, and you may feel quite unsettled on the inside. When you start sitting in stillness each day, you will become aware of all the parts of your self that are **not** still. This is normal, so just keep going. Don't think "I can't do it" because this will pass within a couple of weeks. You will start to experience periods of peace and calm even if it is mixed with restlessness initially.

There are meditations where you repeat a mantra over and over gently in your mind. As you repeat the mantra, it will change, being gross and stronger at some points and more subtle and ethereal at other times during your practise.

You may choose to focus on your breathing, watching the breath moving in through your nose and out through your nose. There are many breathing meditation practises which are truly wonderful.

You may like a more spiritual focus and actively invoke a spiritual essence, deity or power.

You may choose a combination. There is no right or wrong way. Choose whatever “meditation or contemplation” feels right to you and commit to a daily practise. The benefits are soooooo worth it! If you dedicate 15–20 minutes once or twice a day to YOU and your inner life... balance, guidance, clarity and peace will follow and your level of awareness will expand.

When harmony is reached in meditation, a deeper, richer flow of energy pours forth like a fountain into the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual parts of you. The cells of your body, which are composed of these elements are nourished and enlivened. Your true potential is uncovered, self love and understanding naturally evolve. Life becomes richer and more beautiful. Now who wouldn't want that?!

As I contemplate, and reflect on my writings, I know that no words can relay the experience, truth, expansion, peace and ultimate joy that meditation brings. It's organic! It's life changing! I wouldn't go a day without sitting in meditation, it's treasures are invaluable!

GIVE IT A GO!!! I'll meet you out in the cosmos...

Christine Heart Savage