

Acem Meditation eNews

No. 2 2009 - text version

Online version: acem.com

■ ACEM

Email: Acem International

Internet: www.acem.com

P. b. 2559 Solli, N-0202 Oslo, Norway

Tel: (+47) 23 11 87 00 Fax: (+47) 22 831 831

Five times a year, Acem Meditation eNews gives you an update on activities, publications and developments in Acem International School of Meditation. The eNews also brings articles on meditation for Acem meditators and others with an interest in meditation.

Content in this issue:

Why do you meditate? Meditating in the heart of Germany

Invitation to an open house?



Why do you meditate?

That is not an easy question. An answer can be enthusiastic and elaborate or simple and humble. It may include a list of scientific research findings about relaxation and better health, or it may employ metaphorical phrases: adjusting one's focus to a wide-angle perspective, giving peripheral thoughts more elbow room, doors opening inwards. Or simply that in every meditation life pays you a visit.

The question is almost as difficult to answer as this one: Why do you reflect on the past, or for that matter the future? What do you say to that? Maybe that reflection enables the mental digestion of experiences. Creates a sense of coherence and continuity. Lifelines become longer. Everyday life is less dull, more meaningful. Maybe you say that reflection leads to self-insight, which in turn improves interpersonal communication, be it with a spouse, family members or colleagues - though this is not to

imply that reflection makes you perfect. If you give this kind of answer to the question of why meditate, new question-marks are guaranteed to pop up in the eyes of the person who asked.

Because how can an effortless mental activity such as meditation make everyday life more significant? Your attempt to explain may be futile; you can hear that your words are failing to capture the experience. Besides, the person who asked probably wasn't looking for an existential thesis. So one usually ends up giving a straightforward answer: Acem Meditation is the best stress-killer. And this reply is quite valid; most people find that tensions decrease during meditation and the turmoil of everyday concerns in one's head grows calmer.

Yet, something remains unspoken.

Doors that open inwards? And then life is supposed to pay you a visit? Well, yes, these metaphors do convey something about meditation. A continuous flow of impressions from the day, thoughts, plans, memories, bodily sensations, worries, hopes - all of these come to see you during the meditation half-hour, like guests that are just dropping by. The door-opener is the meditation sound. With the effortless repetition of the sound the host(ess) establishes a free enough mental attitude to let the guests come and go as they like. However, quite a number of guests pull the host(ess) aside, involving him/her in conversation. The door-opener may be useful, not only for letting guests in, but also for seeing them off.

Not all guests are welcome. Some come barging through the door without knocking, demanding immediate attention – literally a pain in the neck. And what would a host(ess) with a free mental attitude say? "Oh, hello, it's you again. I could honestly have done without you turning up during my meditation today. I am so tired and I really don't understand why you keep bothering me. But ok, since you are here, have a seat. I'll keep in touch while I continue doing my thing, repeating the sound."

On the other hand, sometimes an unassuming guest shows up, often standing still at a distance from the rest. You can clearly sense the calm but attentive presence of this quiet visitor.

So what is the point in extending an open house to an unpredictable guest-list of everyday thoughts and emotions? That brings us back to where we started: why do you meditate?

Being a meditative host(ess) to one's inner life means being ready to encounter anything that strides through the door. It may be exciting, annoying or boring, but it is often a relief to realise that whatever comes to mind is something passing by - for example, that the self-devaluating thought which intrudes into your meditation is just an ordinary visitor among many others.

The person who asked the question in the first place may not be much the wiser if you answer that to meditate means to practise being a door-opener, or to pay oneself a visit. But he or she might just notice the calm and unassuming guest in the way you respond.

Acem and Are Holen on YouTube



The following new videos are now available on YouTube:

Why meditate?

with Acem's founder Dr. Are Holen

The goal of Acem Meditation

with Dr. Are Holen

Retreats Around the World

Search for Acem Meditation at www.youtube.com

Meditating in the heart of Germany



When husband and wife both meditate, it is easier to keep up the habit. Hubert and Christiane Ahles are both energised by Acem Meditation.

Marktzeuln is a little village in Oberfranken, situated among woods, rolling hills and meadows to the north of Bavaria. This charming and friendly South German village is quiet and full of beautiful woodframe houses with lovely gardens.

This is where Hubert and Christiane Ahles live with their two lively daughters, Eva (12) and Sophie (14). And this is where they practise Acem Meditation daily. Both are keen proponents of the technique.

Hubert makes his living as a bank manager in a nearby town; Christiane is a qualified nurse who teaches baby care and sports in a local school, and also offers classes in relaxation techniques and sports in a clinic for the drug addicted. The family is close. They like to go downhill skiing in the winter and to bike and walk in the summer. They handle stress by meditating, doing sports and going out together.

Meditation à deux

Christiane was the first to get in touch with Acem. She had been looking for useful relaxation techniques for herself and perhaps her clients. Through the Internet she found out about Acem, and at the

Acem Meditation helps Hubert and Christiane Ahles meet the challenges of everyday life. Their daughters Eva and Sophie find nothing peculiar about their parents' habit.

first opportunity she went to a beginner's course in Nuremberg. Since then she has been meditating on a daily basis.

At first, her new habit was met with curious interest from Hubert and the girls. Christiane would withdraw to her room for half an hour and expect to be left in peace and quiet by the rest of the family. Hubert eventually became really interested and decided to give it a go himself. Now they see it as advantageous that both of them meditate. They do it together whenever convenient, and neither of them feels guilty for spending time during the day with their eyes closed. They also keep each other going during phases of low motivation. For while it is often easy to meditate with a free mental attitude, there may also be periods when a half-hour seems like half an eternity. They compare it to jogging, where regular practice helps you put in more effort and clock up a certain number of hours.

How do Hubert and Christiane fit Acem Meditation into their daily schedule? They always meditate in the morning, and sometimes also in the afternoon. In

the beginning, the girls were inquisitive. They were allowed to sit with their parents in the dark room, but headed for other activities after a few minutes. Now they find nothing peculiar about their parents' habit.

Seeing what is important

What has changed for Hubert and Christiane since they took up meditation? They both have more energy. Hubert adds that he can now focus on the most important aspects of any situation and finds it easier to handle complex situations. Christiane

says meditation improves her ability to cope with the challenges of life in general and that the flow of spontaneous thoughts during meditation gives her access to creativity. Even if she has to set time aside for meditation, she feels that all in all she now has more time at her disposal.

The couple finds that long meditations and weekend retreats with Acem offer a valuable deepening of the meditation experience. In particular, the discussions and guidance groups enrich their practice and lead to a better self-understanding. They are already looking forward to their next opportunity!

Acem Meditation on Wikipedia



Where can you direct friends who want to know more about Acem Meditation?

There is always Acem's own web site, acem.com. But now you can also refer them to the famous web-based encyclopedia Wikipedia, which features an informative article about the technique.

Search for Acem Meditation
on Wikipedia.com

Read the Dyade blog in English



Acem's cultural magazine Dyade (in Norwegian) runs a daily blog with an automated translation service into English. The results may not always be perfect but will still give you an impression of some of the hot topics discussed: reviews of films, books and exhibitions, Barack Obama, China, India and the U.S., meditation, the climate, vegetarian food, science & technology, sex and humour!

See blog.dyade.no

Retreats for Acem meditators

See www.acem.com for upcoming retreats