

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

MEDITATION AND REAL FREEDOM

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Real freedom is about fulfilling our destiny as a human being. So what does it take to be really free? I believe this is a seminal question for anybody's life.

Here are two recent posts on Twitter (tweets) from Deepak Chopra. They are both about religion:

Organized religion is the institutionalization of guilt.

Organized religion is a cult with a large following.

Not bad for 140 characters! (That is what a tweet allows.) These are bold, strong statements making huge generalizations. Nonetheless, I believe Chopra's statements contain a truth. Often, organized religion has not encouraged real freedom, but kept people in some kind of bondage—bondage of the mind and of the spirit. But of course, it doesn't have to be a religious belief or a religious organization that does that. I think we witness people chaining themselves to all kinds of beliefs, organizations and groups of people, while losing their freedom in the process.

What does it mean, to really be free? To be free in thought and feeling, to be free in expression. There are many falsehoods regarding what freedom really is. I am grateful that the United States, and many other countries, provide for certain freedoms by law. But just because a person can vote and say what they choose doesn't make them free.

The commercial world would have us believe that to be free means we can buy whatever we want. But is a person who is not fulfilling their destiny as a human being really free, not matter what they acquire?

Fulfilling one's destiny as an individual has to involve other people. I cannot think of a meaningful destiny that wouldn't. Ultimately, individual destiny is tied to the destiny of humanity as a whole. So real freedom has to include the freedom to join with other people to fulfill our collective destiny. There is no freedom in chaining ourselves to the thinking of other people or of organizations. But there is also no freedom in separation from other people.

What sets a person free? To be really free, a person must be able to think for themselves. Another word for thinking is *meditation*. I know that word means many different things to different people. To me, meditation is simply a pattern of thought that connects a person more consciously to the source of wisdom and love within them. For that to occur, the flow of thoughts has to evoke a feeling state that connects a person spiritually.

It is impossible to think your way into real freedom. Thinking alone won't take a person there. The flow of thought has to open the emotional body because it is the emotional body that has the direct contact with the spirit within a person. That is the primary purpose of the emotional body—to put us in touch with the invisible source of our own wisdom and love. But for most people, that's not what is happening. Most often, there is disturbance and some kind of reactive pattern based on past pain. Eckhart Tolle named this phenomenon as the development of the emotional pain body.

When a person isn't free, their flow of negative thinking activates the emotional pain body and keeps it disturbed. There are beliefs the person holds about themselves, about other people and about life that perpetually reinjure the emotional body: "I'm bad." "I'm not good enough." "Most people are selfish." "God is angry and must be appeased." And on it goes. Then there is a kind of attention paid to events as they unfold in a person's life that sets up a pattern of emotional reaction to those events and, with it, more injury to the emotional body. The person becomes disconnected from the source of their own wisdom and love in the process. Then the negative-mind chatter keeps the wounding and disconnection going.

So meditation is thinking that takes the emotional body away from what injures it and puts the emotional body in touch with spiritual flow. This is so simple, and yet so profound. I believe that this is the beginning of real freedom for anybody—easily practiced. You do have to be willing to challenge the group-think of whatever group of which you are a part. You do have to be willing to test the beliefs of your own religion, whether it is organized religion or your own personal brand of disorganized religion. You have to see if what you are thinking is setting you free to fulfill your destiny, or chaining you to misery and limitation.

Here is a simple meditation practice: In all things, give thanks. Whatever is happening in your life, whatever is up, whatever seems challenging, whatever hurdle there is, whatever sorrow you are encountering, in all things, give thanks. Begin to think about what you have to be thankful for. Get past any way that it might seem counterintuitive to you if something is happening that you do not like. Practice gratitude. If you really do that, it becomes more than a mental practice; it becomes an emotional practice. If it gets traction for you, it is because something is happening in your feeling realm. You are *really* giving thanks for what is present in your life and for the opportunity you have to live. It takes the mental practice to lead the emotional body into the experience.

The meditation may begin with outer things: all the people and things that have come to you. But if you keep the practice going, what you find is that it leads to gratitude for the inner things, for what is bubbling up inside you. Gratitude that, no matter what the circumstance you are in, you are equipped from within to *be* in that circumstance—you've been given life with which to address that circumstance. You have the power of love within you that can love, no matter what is happening. As this mental practice, this meditation, is taken up, the emotional body engages with the spirit that's within a person. You begin to touch an invisible place within, and there begins to be a flow of power and intelligence from that place, through the emotional body, back through the thinking, and then into action in your life. You are empowered from within. Any true meditation has that effect: it empowers you from within, and it sets you free to fulfill your destiny.

Here is another simple meditation practice. It is embodied in this simple saying: *You know what you express*. I learned this practice when I first met Emissaries of Divine Light. I was a high school student, and I was an unhappy young man. I was looking for freedom and I was angry that I was living in a world that seemed to me to be so hopeless. It was hard to hear from Dr. Bill Bahan that I was creating my own unhappy experience. But while it was tough medicine, it was the beginning of my freedom; because when I pondered what had been said to me, when I began to meditate upon the fact that I *was* experiencing what I was expressing and that I could express something different, I realized that I could *choose* to express anything. My destiny was in my own hands.

I still practice this meditation every day. When I'm faced with a situation that I don't know the answer to, when I am faced with a challenge, I recall that I experience what I express, and I can put out into my world the expression of the spirit that's within me. I have followed that practice long enough to know that in the face of challenge or uncertainty, my world changes in a creative direction when I keep putting the creative spirit within me into that world. Certainly, my experience changes. But somehow, the very factors that I'm fretting over, if I'm tending to fret, reshape and reform and take a different place in my life, based on what I express.

Lloyd Arthur Meeker, who founded Emissaries of Divine Light, described what he was doing as the "spiritual expression plane approach." What a brilliant name for this phase of the spiritual journey

for humanity! Not the spirit-up-in-the-sky approach; not the wait-till-you-die approach, or the you-just-have-to-have-faith approach. The pivotal factor in this phase of humanity's journey is spiritual *expression*. It's about what comes *through* us as human beings. You can know the Divine by letting the Divine come through you into expression and into your world. You can be empowered by what comes through you, and set free. When you are, your world thrives.

You know what you express. It is a simple mental practice to remind oneself of that reality. The mental practice becomes a spiritual practice as it engages the emotional body and assists the emotional body to relate to the wisdom and love within you.

What sets us free? What does it really mean to think for yourself? Thinking that is really fresh and new in this moment, not something simply dragged up out of the past that you heard someplace or read someplace, but something that is born fresh and new through you, and through this wonderful mind that we all have. It is amazing how many people don't give themselves freedom to think. If we can set our minds free, we can walk down the path that sets free the emotional body. There are even fewer people who are free in that regard. And if we truly set our emotional body free to relate to the wisdom and love that is within us, we will be setting our spirit free to express on earth, so that we can be the powerful, glorious Being in expression on earth that we are in reality. That is our potential and our destiny.

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