



Stephen In Seated Meditation

Hello all. Welcome to the March *COHERENCE Newsletter*. This month we begin *the meditation series* with the article, “On The Matter Of Meditation”. In this issue I offer you my hypotheses on meditation, its roots, its purpose, and its practice.

Knowing me as a breathing advocate, you may be wondering why I’m writing about meditation - in response, I submit that conscious breathing and meditation are really the same thing. If we breathe consciously as we go about our day, we are involved in “light” mindful meditation. If we add the elements of deep relaxation and stillness, depth and profundity of the meditative experience ensues rapidly. While there are many schools of thought regarding meditative practice, I offer that at their root, they all share conscious breathing, posture, relaxation, and stillness. Of these, with the exception of “conscious reflection” itself, breathing is the most important, for without it, meditation fails to function.

I hold the theory that the practice that we refer to today as “meditation” was an integral part of early man’s normal existence and was necessary for survival. Imagine for a moment a time before civilization, a time when humans lived and slept in the wild...

In this world, when the sun went down, it was very important to remain still, quiet, and yet vigilant, lest one fall prey to predators roaming the night. I see myself in a tree, remaining perfectly still and breathing slowly and deeply so that I cannot hear my own breath. As my breath becomes slower and deeper my body begins to relax, as it must if I am going to remain still and comfortable for a long period of time. My body and mind begin to slip into an altered state, a state where my body, perched among the limbs, becomes immobile yet strong and supportive. My mind becomes quiet and my senses heightened (as they are known to become as theta brainwaves begin to predominate). If I am attacked and must defend myself while in this state, I possess the strength of many men, as my strength is not inhibited as it is when I am fully awake.

As I continue, I begin to feel the breath moving through my body, growing in intensity, becoming highly “electrical”. The current addresses any injury or soreness that I may have, unraveling knots and healing wounds, revitalizing my entire body. Any discomfort I am feeling dissolves. As the energy continues to build, thoughts, images, and memories flash by, pouring forth as if “released”. My mind is swept clean of the trials, tribulations, and potential horrors of the day. In time, thoughts and images are replaced by white light, in which I rest for the remainder of the night - passing in and out of consciousness, though remaining vigilant. As day breaks, the golden sun replaces the light of my inner moon. My mind and body have been refreshed and renewed.

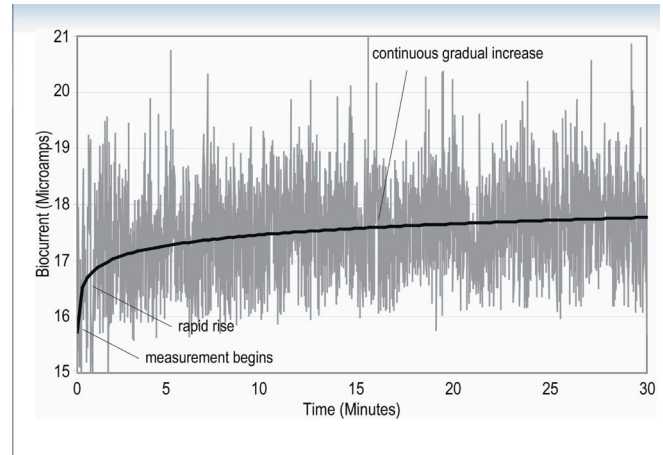
I, “primordial man”, attribute no “spiritual” significance to this experience, it is simply a biological function that is necessary for solitary survival in a world before the defense of shelter. In the 3rd newsletter in this series, I’ll offer my beliefs regarding meditation, spirituality, and

cosmic consciousness. There is (at least one) meditative practice that results in the unmistakable realization that “everything is one”. It is the same practice that yielded the understanding of the meridian system of traditional Chinese medicine and India’s system of nadis.

As we “meditate” in this way, much of what we experience both physically and psychologically is an outcome of energy build-up in the body. By “energy” I literally mean bio-electricity - it isn’t an esoteric notion. It is real and can be observed and measured as increased current flow between the human body and Earth ground as meditation progresses. It can also be felt and cultivated.

This energy is China’s “qi” (chi), and India’s “prana”, “qi gong” and “pranayama” being their the respective practices for cultivating it. It powers all of the processes of the body. When it waxes, health is robust. When it wanes, health is at risk. When it ceases, life ends.

The illustration to the right demonstrates an increase in current between the body and a dedicated Earth ground over a period of 30 minutes. We see it rise very quickly and then continue a gradual rise for the remainder of the session. In next month’s newsletter I’ll demonstrate how increased bioenergy ultimately results in the phenomenon known as the spontaneous kriya, where the body begins to move and shake involuntarily, the process resolving muscle knots and blockages in the nervous system.



Biocurrent of Coherent Breathing
from *The New Science of Breath* - 2005

This energetic build up is fundamentally an outcome of self-reflection and breathing. By “self reflection”, I mean placing one’s mental focus on the body. An easiest way to do this is to place the mind on the skin, sensing the entire surface of the body all at once. Hold it there and breathe.

In Taoist parlance this is referred to as “turning the light of consciousness around” as opposed to allowing it to dissipate like the light of a lamp illuminating the night. Paraphrasing *The Secret Of The Golden Flower*, a Taoist classic, “when we turn the light around, the energy in the body rises up”. This is the beauty of *conscious* breathing. Not only does it allow us to regulate frequency and depth optimally, which we know relates to circulatory effectiveness, perfusion, and gas exchange, all of which affect energy production, it also requires some small portion of our consciousness to be reflected upon the body, heightening the affect.

When we meditate, by *consciously* regulating our breathing, posture, relaxation, and stillness, we place all of our attention upon the body, and when we do, energy builds up very rapidly, and with it we are thrust into the meditative experience.

Thank you all for your interest. Next month we’ll consider the spontaneous kriya.

Stephen Elliott - COHERENCE

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