

Glossary of Terms Used in The Infinite Way in Reference to Meditation

While Joel has given us several ways to go within, sometimes he uses the same word—“meditation”—to refer to any one of them, and we have to infer from the context which one he is talking about. These descriptions can be helpful.

Practicing the Presence

Practicing the Presence is a spiritual practice in which we use short contemplations to keep the mind attuned to God throughout the day in all activities. It helps develop the capacity for longer periods of contemplation.

Contemplative Meditation

Contemplative Meditation is any practice in which we use the mind to contemplate or ponder spiritual truth. Joel suggests that if we are beginning a meditation practice, we start by contemplating the question, “What is God?” However, any spiritually meaningful question, Bible verse, or statement of truth can serve as a focus for contemplation. Contemplative meditation can quiet the mind and lead us into a state of silent receptivity, which Joel often characterizes as the attitude, “Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth.”

Treatment

Treatment refers to a contemplative meditation done specifically for a spiritual healing purpose, for oneself or another. A treatment contemplation focuses on the principles of The Infinite Way, which Joel sometimes refers to as “the healing principles,” but which are, in fact, the major principles of The Infinite Way—the nature of God, the nature of individual being, the nature of error, and the nature of prayer. As with contemplative meditation, treatment can lead us into the state of silent receptivity.

Meditation, Prayer, or Communion

“Meditation,” “prayer,” and “communion” all refer to the state of silent receptivity, in which we have stopped thinking or contemplating and are listening in silence for “the still small voice.” It makes no difference whether you hear anything. You do not look for results. You just set up that vacuum into which the presence and power can come.

There may still be a sense of a “back and forth” with God, or a sense of twoness. In other words, there is an I who is listening, and eventually, I become aware of the presence within me, and I can commune with it. This may seem to be in words, but it need not be. It can be a silent feeling of inner communion, just as two people can be in communion, sitting together without words or thoughts in perfect harmony.

While contemplative meditation helps us reach the state of “meditation,” “prayer,” or “communion,” as we advance, we can develop the ability to enter the silence immediately at will.

Union

Union refers to the ultimate spiritual experience of oneness. In this state, there is no sense of duality or separation; there is only the experience of perfect unity.

World Work

World work is a specialized practice of dedicating three periods each day to uplifting the consciousness of the world and dissolving the material sense that keeps it in bondage. World work can begin as a contemplative meditation, followed by silent receptivity, or it can be going directly into the silence, for those who are able to do that.

We go into world work with no personal desires and without criticism, judgment, or condemnation of others. We do not seek to change the conditions of "this world." As with meditation, our intention is solely to experience the Presence, to realize the Christ within, and thereby release the influence of the Christ into the world. Joel said, "It has been given to me that if a band of realized Christ-consciousness is formed around the world, it will touch and awaken individual consciousness and bring lasting freedom to the world."

For more information about world work, [click/tap here](#).