

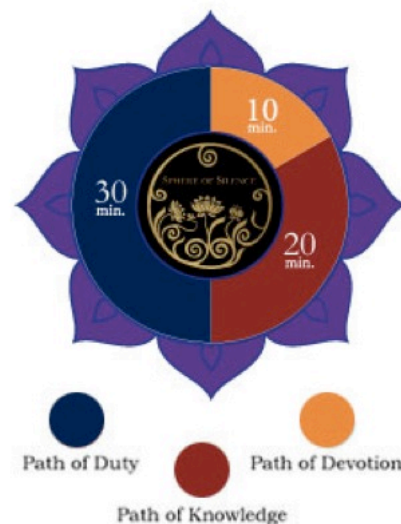
THE SPHERE OF SILENCE

The Sphere of Silence is a one-hour reflection that teaches us to be quiet and examine ourselves. It is a daily practice which involves being silent and learning from our own experience. It is taught by Vijay Eswaran, a successful entrepreneur, author and speaker who credits his accomplishments to this simple practice he learned from his grandfather. He considers it the single most powerful thing any person can do to succeed both in business and in life.

By the simple and regular practice of the Sphere of Silence, we acquire an intense insight into everything we do and are able to accomplish great things with our lives. It is a synthesis of ancient wisdom stemming from the universally accepted teaching of practicing silence. Sixty minutes in the Sphere of Silence every day enables us to slow down and take stock of where we are and where we are headed.

This practice is one hour of our day that helps us master the remaining twenty three hours of the day. It is made up of three paths of reflection: (1) Duty (2) Knowledge and (3) Devotion. The Sphere of Silence can be applied to any field of endeavor, and it is specially effective in the arena of management and leadership.

The Sphere of Silence



THE GROUND RULES

The best time to practice the Sphere of Silence is in the early morning hours, before the chaos of the day begins. But it can be practiced at any time of the day that is convenient to you.

- You must maintain absolute silence during this period and focus completely on what you are doing.
- No form of external communication during the period is allowed. No phones, laptops and TV etc.
- No breaks, music or any other distractions are allowed during this period.
- If you break the silence, or get distracted by external stimuli, then you must start the process all over again.
- For this daily practice you will need a Journal, a Pen, a Watch and a Book / Learning Material of your choice.

THE PATH OF DUTY (30 mins)

The *Path of Duty* is setting clear goals for each day and the next day, spending time to look back at those set the previous day. The time spent reflecting on the accomplishments of the last day helps in analysis of actions, and also in articulating who we want to be. The Path of Duty has three equal parts:

Past (10 mins)

Here we analyze our activities from yesterday. Map the success or progress rate of the tasks planned and identify reasons for failure.

- (A) Reflect back on yesterday. What was done well and how can it be joyfully improved?
- (B) Introspect the reasons why some tasks were not done. What were the learnings from yesterday? What can be done differently next time? Write down all these reflections in a positive way, focusing on potentials and possibilities instead of emphasizing mistakes.
- (C) See yourself responding with more clarity and wisdom and doing the same things successfully next time. Feel the way you would feel if you have already integrated the learnings.

Present (10 mins)

This is where we plan for today and list down our activities for the day. It is important to keep this list very realistic.

- (A) Write down all your plans for the day. What are the 3-5 most important things that you must do today? What are some other things that are nice to do? Be realistic. Aim to under-promise and over-deliver, not over-promise and under-deliver.
- (B) Apart from doing, what inner attitude or quality of being can you practice all day today?
- (C) See yourself going through the day with clarity and wisdom and joyfully doing the all these things one thing at a time. Feel the way you would feel if you have already done all these things, better than anticipated.

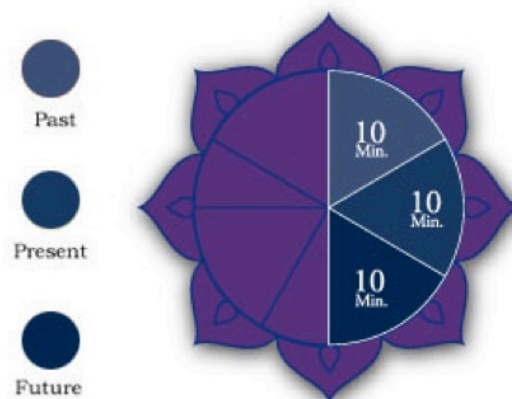
Future (10 mins)

This is where we envision the best possible outcome for our life and how we wish to contribute in the world.

- (A) Short term: Set your goals for tomorrow and the coming week.
- (B) Mid term: Set your goals for the coming twelve months.
- (C) Long term: Set your goals for the next five to ten years.
- (D) Don't just think of what you can get for yourself, think of what you can do for the benefit of others. Write these goals every single day. This keeps them at forefront of your mind.
- (E) See yourself achieving all these goals and feel the way you would feel if you have already accomplished them.

All of these reflections must be written down in your journal. This helps clarify our mind and also creates a record.

The Path of Duty 30 mins



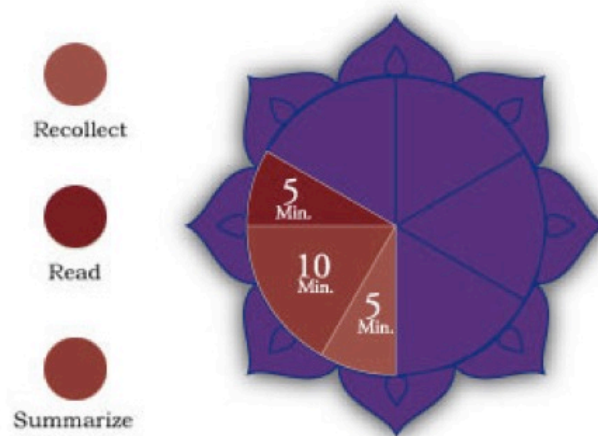
THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE (20 mins)

The Path of Knowledge seeks to build our capacity to remember what we have learned. By doing this, the mind's ability to retain facts is said to improve drastically. Memory is a tool we require everyday and this is developed in the Path of Knowledge. Memory is required to achieve continuity in thought process. All great leaders have excellent memory and are able to recall facts effortlessly.

We can read any inspiring or educational book, listen to a recorded talk, or read essays and articles that help enhance our knowledge.

- (A) The first 15 minutes are dedicated to deepening knowledge by reading the book or listening to the audio.
- (B) The next 5 minutes are kept for us to summarize in writing what we have learnt from the reading or listening. This is done from memory. Then we can briefly check what points we missed out. Add the points that were missed out.
- (C) Recollect and read your notes before continuing with the learning materials the next day.

The Path of Knowledge 20 mins



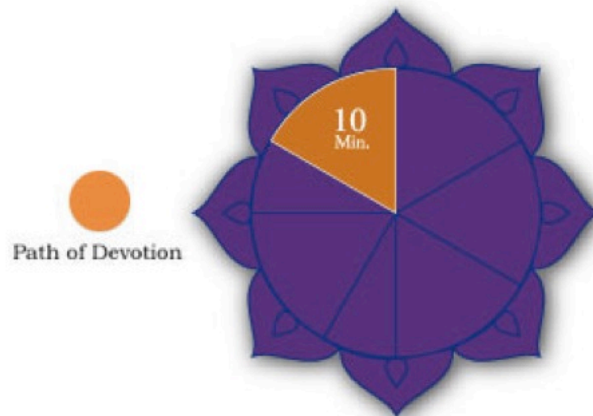
THE PATH OF DEVOTION (10 mins)

The *Path of Devotion* is the time taken to converse with the Intelligence that creates, sustains and animates all things in the Universe. It is a 10-minute inner conversation on any subject that one wishes to have with God and is done in anyway that we find comfortable. We can use this time to ask any questions in our heart, and then wait in receptive silence for clarity and answers. The amazing thing about this process is that your answers will come to us in some form or another.

The atheist is not excluded in this Path. Mr. Eswaran suggests for the atheist to commune with truth and goodness. He says, “I would add another ‘o’. Instead of God, I would use good.”

This 10-minute reflection here should also be written down.

The Path of Devotion 10 mins



SUMMARY & SUGGESTIONS

- Spend an hour of the day in complete silence. Early morning time is best. Else, any other time.
- The Path of Duty (30 mins): The first 10 mins are spent writing reflections on what happened yesterday. The next 10 mins writing reflections on what needs to be done today. Then 10 mins on writing intentions for the coming week, year and five to ten years.
- The Path of Knowledge (20 mins): Review yesterday's notes and refresh your memory. Read or listen to something inspiring or educational for 15 mins. Use your memory to write what you remember for 5 mins. Check to see what you missed and include that as well.
- The Path of Devotion (10 mins): Spend 10 mins being silent and receptive. Have an inner conversation with what you consider to be the Source of all things. Write your specific questions and what insights and inspirations occur to you.
- An alternative way of practicing The Sphere of Silence is starting with The Path of Devotion (10 mins), then The Path of Knowledge (20 mins) and concluding with The Path of Duty (30 mins).
- Children can also do this practice. If one hour is too long for them they can do the entire practice in 30 mins, spending about half the time on all the three Paths.
- Do this practice for an hour a day, for 21 days, without missing a single day. After 21 days, keep a full day of silence and reflect on this experience. If it was useful to you, then make this a part of your life.

For further details, read the book “*In the Sphere of Silence*” by Vijay Eswaran, Rythm House Publishing.
<http://www.inthesphereofsilence.com>