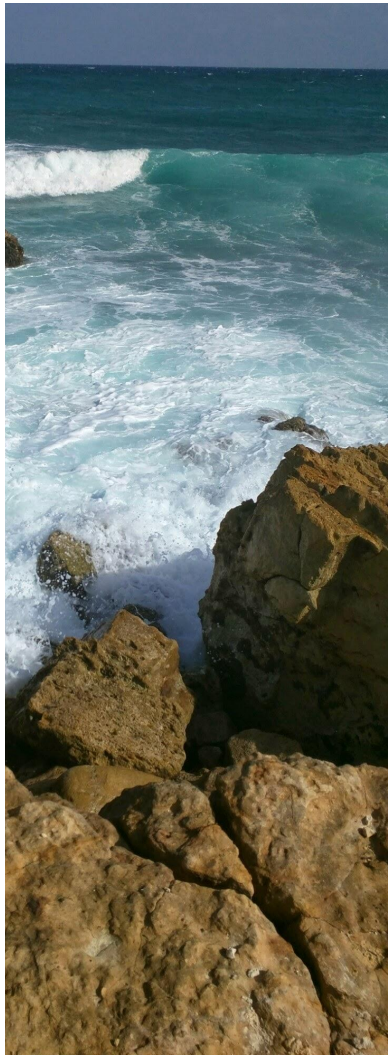

Lesson 2

In Harmony With Nature

SOLO RETREAT PLANNER

Academy of Inner Knowledge
Teresa L. Crosier, D.O.M.

Lesson 2 - Contents

- Step 5 - Meditation
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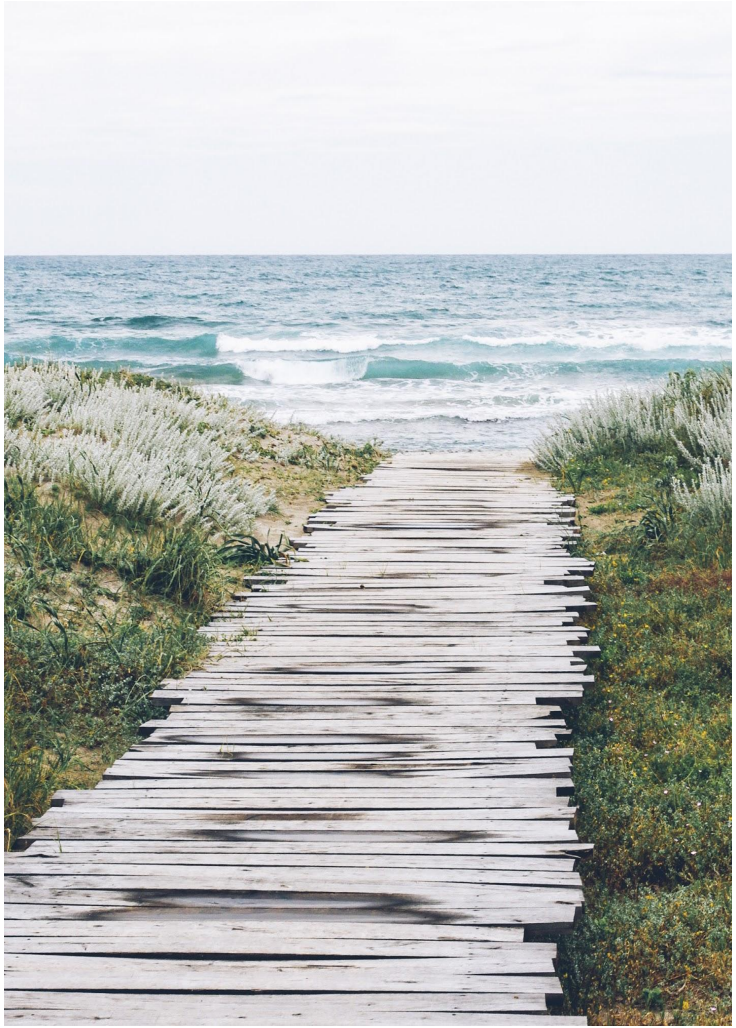
- Step 7 - Seasonal Questions



STEP FIVE

Kinda-like Meditation

We have all heard about and maybe even experienced the life-changing benefits of meditation, such as:

- Decreased blood pressure and hypertension
- Lowered cholesterol levels
- Increased production of the anti-aging hormone DHEA
- Improved immune function
- Decreased anxiety, depression, and insomnia

In addition to the obvious physiological benefits . . .

The purpose of meditation is in its ability to raise your vibrational frequency so that you're in that state of being more often.

Through the breath, you are connecting with your Spirit, the bigger part of who you are. What happens with regular meditation is that you begin operating in your day-to-day life from a higher level of consciousness.

When you have been meditating regularly, you are able to allow yourself to stay for longer periods of time in that place that feels good, calm and peaceful. You attract into your life, situations and people that feel good. You also attract experiences, events and opportunities that feel good.

Meditation helps you find the clarity to be able to hold onto those thoughts as your deliberate focus.

Instructions for Sitting Meditation

There are three parts to sitting meditation:

1. Sit up straight
2. Follow your breath
3. Smile

Sit up straight

Good posture is important. The best way to do this is to visualize your spine as a stack of quarters. Another good visualization is to imagine a taut string attached to the crown of your head, suspended from a star. You may sit on a cushion on the floor with your legs folded or you may also sit in a chair. As long as your spine is straight it doesn't matter.

The goal is to sit quietly with minimal movement for at least 10 minutes. Begin with the 7-7-7 breath. Inhale for 7 counts, hold for 7 counts, and exhale for 7 counts. Do this at first 7 times. Then progress to 7 -10 minutes.

Follow your breath.

There are several areas of the body where you can follow your breath: you can focus on the tip of your nose, the area between your nostrils and upper lip, your throat, your chest or your abdomen.

My preference is abdominal breathing. The best way to get in touch with abdominal breathing is to lie on your back. Notice how the belly rises on the in breath and falls back to the spine on the out breath.

Now when meditating, there is no need to exaggerate the motion of the abdomen. Merely observe. But a curious thing happens. Just by giving attention, your breathing becomes slower, smoother, and the abdomen gets more involved.

Smile.

Meditation should be a pleasure, a mini-vacation, something you do just for you. It should be light and airy, not heavy and ponderous. So, practice smiling in your practice because you are doing something for you.

Questions?

What do I do with my hands?

Allow your hands to rest on your thighs with your elbows close to your body. This keeps undue stress off of your shoulders, which might alter your upright posture. You may fold your hands in your lap, hold them in the empty bowl pose, or the anchoring pose with tips of thumb and forefinger lightly touching.

What do I do if I get uncomfortable?

It is perfectly allowable to adjust your posture. If you are too restless, however, realize it is probably your mind, not your body.

What do I do with my mind?

This is of course, the most important question.

Mere observation of the breath is all that is required, yet the mind seems unable to settle. It goes from thought to thought; thoughts of the past, the future, worries, projects, etc. It swings like a monkey from branch to branch, never staying anywhere for long.

The more you sit with your thoughts, the more you will become aware of what else is happening while you are sitting.

Beneath the thoughts are emotions rising
and beneath that,
a sense of calm.

Did you get there?

Three Questions To Go Into Your Meditation With

1. Who am I when I am operating from my deepest Spiritual self?

2. What do I want in this human experience?

3. How can I take my unique talents and passions and serve others?

STEP SIX

Practice Mindfulness

Practice Mindfulness in Everything You Do

Since you get to choose what you feel inspired to do, make a conscious effort to **pay focused attention** to each move you make during your retreat.

OBSERVE

Do I eat only when I'm hungry, or do I find myself reaching for food to avoid, cover up, or fill an empty space that I've been unable to fill with joy in my life? The point is not to fix it or berate yourself, but to make the space to become aware of it. Then you can focus on it once you have that awareness.

Why is my energy so low? Am I just tired or am I totally exhausted? Is it physical or emotional?

Am I getting enough sleep at night? Do I need to get to bed earlier? Or am I exhausted because I'm no longer excited by the work I do, in my relationships, or in my life in general?

These are things to take note of because they hover beneath the surface of our lives asking us to pay attention to them.

STEP SEVEN

Seasonal Questions

Look to the energy of the current season
to find the answers to the
questions burning
within

Depending on the season, there are certain questions that can be asked to bring more clarity into our lives at this time.

The Energy of Spring

a time of new growth

Questions to ask during the Spring:

What would I like to grow in my life this year?

Who or what do I need to weed out of my life that is no longer serving me?

Which seeds shall I plant first? How can I allow myself to prepare for my next step, once I have planted the seeds?

How do I envision the outcome looking?

How can I allow what's happening in nature to teach me what I need to know right now?

The Energy of Summer

In Summer, we express the yang principle of heat, expansion, growth, lightness, outward activity, brightness and creativity

Questions to ask during the Summer:

In which areas of my life am I now blooming?

Which seeds have sprouted from my Spring planting?

Where am I coming into fruition?

How can I allow what's happening in nature to teach me what I need to know right now?

The Energy of Late Summer

Late Summer, is the midpoint of yang and yin, where it is as if time has stopped and our lives have suddenly become uncomplicated and trancelike

Questions to ask during the Late Summer:

Are there areas of my life that have already come to fruition?

Can I be still and take it in?

How can I create stillness in my life?

Where am I still growing?

How can I allow what's happening in nature to teach me what I need to know right now?

The Energy of Fall

The energy of Fall is one of harvesting the fruits and labors of Spring’s planting and planning

Questions to ask during the Fall:

What am I ready to let go of?

What do I need to surrender to?

Are there gifts that have come to me that I need to acknowledge and harvest?

Which fruits am I now enjoying that have already ripened?

How can I allow what's happening in nature to teach me what I need to know right now?

The Energy of Winter

Winter is the end of all seasons, a time of dormancy

Questions to ask during the Winter:

How can I slow down and allow my body to rejuvenate?

What type of relaxation works best for me?

How can I allow what's happening in nature to teach me what I need to know right now?

End of Lesson Two

Questions?

Send me an email at drcrosier@yahoo.com