

24x7 MEDITATION

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24x7 Services

In this modern age more and more round the clock services called 'twenty-four by seven' services are provided every-day of the year. In commerce and industry etc. it is possible for a group of committed people to offer such a service round the clock?

Is 24x7 Meditation possible?

So far so good. But can a *mumukshu* take to 24x7 meditation? Is it ever practical? What about attending the bare minimum needs of one's body such as bathing, clothing, eating, sleeping etc.? Without these how can the body be kept in a working condition even to take to meditation?

Yes, it looks just impossible. Yet, it can be done. It is in practice since the Vedic age. Presently, in and through what we do, experience and know, our mind is totally preoccupied with what is done, experienced, known and the world of plurality that we encounter with. All that the *aadhyatmic* lore tells us is to shift and focus our attention on that ultimate principle which enables all our preoccupations and which is the basis of the entire *srishti* (Creation). The *Chhandogyopanishad* declares: Certainly all this is Brahman (13.4.1). This is the gist of all Upanishads without an exception.

All that needs to be done is to keep the constant and consistent vision that everything and everyone is Brahman/*atma* in and through all that we do including sleep. There is nothing else whatsoever other than Brahman. This is setting right our distorted vision by discarding all the erroneous notions that we are engrossed in .

Scriptural *Pramaana* for 24x7 Meditation

Consider the following scriptural passages that aim at such mediation round the clock.

- i) 'Oh Arjuna, be steadfast in the vision that whatever that you do, eat, perform as sacrifice, give in charity or you are going to do is *atma*' (*Yogavasishtha Ni.Pu.* 54.22). This statement is similar to a verse in the *Bhagavadgita* (9.27) with a slight difference. Here, Lord Krishna says, 'offer all these to me'. This shows that the

true offering to *Ishvara* is to have the steady knowledge all along that everything is *Brahmasvarupa*.

- ii) 'Thoroughly worship the 'bodha-linga' (*chit-svarupa-linga*) by all perceptions, experiences, and sense-enjoyments according to the occasion.' (Lord Shiva to sage Vasishtha, *Yo.Va.Ni.Pu.39.6*). This includes all that we do round the clock including the sleep.
- iii) 'Wherever the mind goes there occur *Samadhi* effortlessly when the identification with the body disappears and Brahman is known directly' (*Saraswati Rahasyopadishad*, 66, *Drik Dishya Viveka*, 30). This teaching is by Goddess Sarasvati to Sage Ashvalayana. Sri Bharatitirtha has commented on it in his text *Drik Dishya Viveka*.

24x7 Meditation in '*Shatashloki*'

Bhagavatpujyapada Shankaracharya describes in '*Shatashloki*' how a *Brahmajnani* conducts himself in the world. His outlook can serve as an inspiration to *mumukshus* to take to meditation round the clock as a means. In his '*Shivamanasa puja*' also Acharya has described our all activities as an act of worship of Lord Shiva.

Here is the vision of a *Brahmajnani* while interacting with the world (*Shatashloki*, 12-13). 'While walking he thinks, " I am a wave in the all pervasive ocean of *atma*". (Just as a wave is not different from the oceanic water, so I am not different from *atma* that is the ocean of *chit*). While sitting he thinks " I am a bead in the form of *jiva* strung in the string of knowledge principle (*chit* or *Hiranyagarbha*)". During the perception he observes, "Oh, I am happy because I got *darshana* (vision) of *atma*". (In every perception, there is an eminent manifestation of *chidabhasa* or reflected *chaitanya* which illumines the thought and objectifies the perceived entity. This *chidabhasa* is considered as '*atmadarshana*' because it is the replica of *chit- atma*. This can be extended to all our activities because without the relevant thoughts or active participation of the mind, no action can take place. *Chidabhasa* is inevitable in all thoughts). "During the deep sleep, I am immersed in the ocean of happiness that is my true nature", so he thinks before going to sleep and after waking up." Certainly, the *mumukshu* who spends 'his life like this abides in *pratyagatma*' (verse-12).

'This perceived *jagat* is a part of *Virat*, the presiding deity of macrocosmic embodiment. (Therefore he has no contempt, censure, intolerance or envy towards it). This *jagat* functions on account *Chit (atma)* that is superior to all *pranas* abiding inside. By that *Chit* only everything is known. This *atma* is neither the doer (*karta*) nor the experiencer (*bhokta*) like the sun. Thus

knowing, he who is endowed with scriptural knowledge and direct cognition of *atma* (*aparoksha-jnana*) conducts his life in contemplation of *Paramatma*/Brahman. (Wherever his mind goes, there he cognizes *Paramatma*)' – verse 13).

24x7 Worship in 'Shivamanasa-puja'

'Shivamanas-puja', first envisages the individual as Lord Shiva with his paraphernalia. Then all activities at all the time everyday are offered to Lord Shiva as a worship. 'Oh Lord, my *atma* is you. My *buddhi* (intellect) is Goddess Parvati. All my vital airs (*pranas*) are your attendants. This physical body is your abode. All my sense-experiences are worshipful offering to you. My sleep is the state of *Samadhi* – absorption in your true nature. You being all pervasive, all my walking is circumambulating you. All of my talks are your hymns. Oh, Shambhu, all that I do at all the time is your propitiation.'

The consistent practice of above awareness can lead to continuous meditation.

[Excerpts compiled by Jayesh Sohoni from the teaching of 'Shatashloki' by Swami Shuddhabodhananda Saraswati.]