

Thoughts During Meditation. The path to insight.

Why do so many people start a meditation practice and then fail to continue it? Most people have a misguided notion of a blissful state of being at total peace, a state removed from thoughts and problems. They begin meditation and find at least initially that they can't stop thoughts and as a result, they become more frustrated than when they begin. I can't tell you how many times I've been told. I can't meditate I can't stop my thoughts and as a result, it's the opposite of the bliss I was expecting. Well, welcome to how all our brains work, and, welcome to a concept called "Monkey Brain" something we all share. Meditation is a practice; it doesn't lead to the annihilation of thoughts. It does something perhaps more powerful. It allows us not to be controlled by our thoughts.

In the great Book, Thoughts Are Not the Enemy. The art of open meditation. The Buddhist Monk Jason Siff asks us among other things to examine our experience during and after meditation. When I write I love to listen to music. In the song Keys to The Kingdom, the Lion King is told "To grow from your past you have to face it." To get to meditative bliss, there's a past that must be faced.

During meditation there's a constant flow of thoughts for me, but by listening to those thoughts I found they had a repetitive nature. For example, although the storyline was constantly changing the point of one of my stories was always the same, I was constantly in my mind protecting myself against being blamed. The characters in my storyline would change but the defense of self didn't. Upon further review, I saw that most of my thoughts could be put in a few boxes.

We have a constant stream of thoughts during meditation, usually about some notion we see due to ego in a way that doesn't exist. Or thoughts during meditation that arrive because of our constant desires, and the third box is the fight box where we play out imaginary arguments and grievances of all types. Ego due to ignorance of how we exist, constant desire and anger playing itself out, and, a continuous thought loop. Listen to it long enough, you might on some occasions laugh and you just might get bored with the same old drama.

I have not achieved meditative bliss not even close, but by listening to my thoughts and understanding why they arise, I've been able to put them in boxes so that when they come up, I can say oh it's you again, and, then let myself feel that, but I don't follow the storyline which is where the real problem lies. By not following the storyline or catching myself when I do, I'm better able to go back to the breath and reside in the present moment where the bliss we seek lives. It was by listening to my thoughts and understanding how repetitive and aimless they can be that I was able to create a space in the Gap that sometimes leads to insight.

LifeLama

