

Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

DDIAN

FROM

Lesson 47



How Do We Meditate?

Gurudeva said,



“ Meditation is a long journey, a pilgrimage into the mind itself.”

He knew that meditation can make life joyous, creative, calm and profound. He gave us clear instructions about this ancient practice.

Meditate just before sunrise and sunset

He taught, "The finest times to meditate are just before sunrise and sunset."

The period of meditation should be from ten minutes to one-half hour to begin with."



Breathing...

Breathing is most important. At first you may find that thoughts are racing through your mind.

By regulating the breath, thoughts are stilled and awareness moves into an area of the mind that does not think but knows.



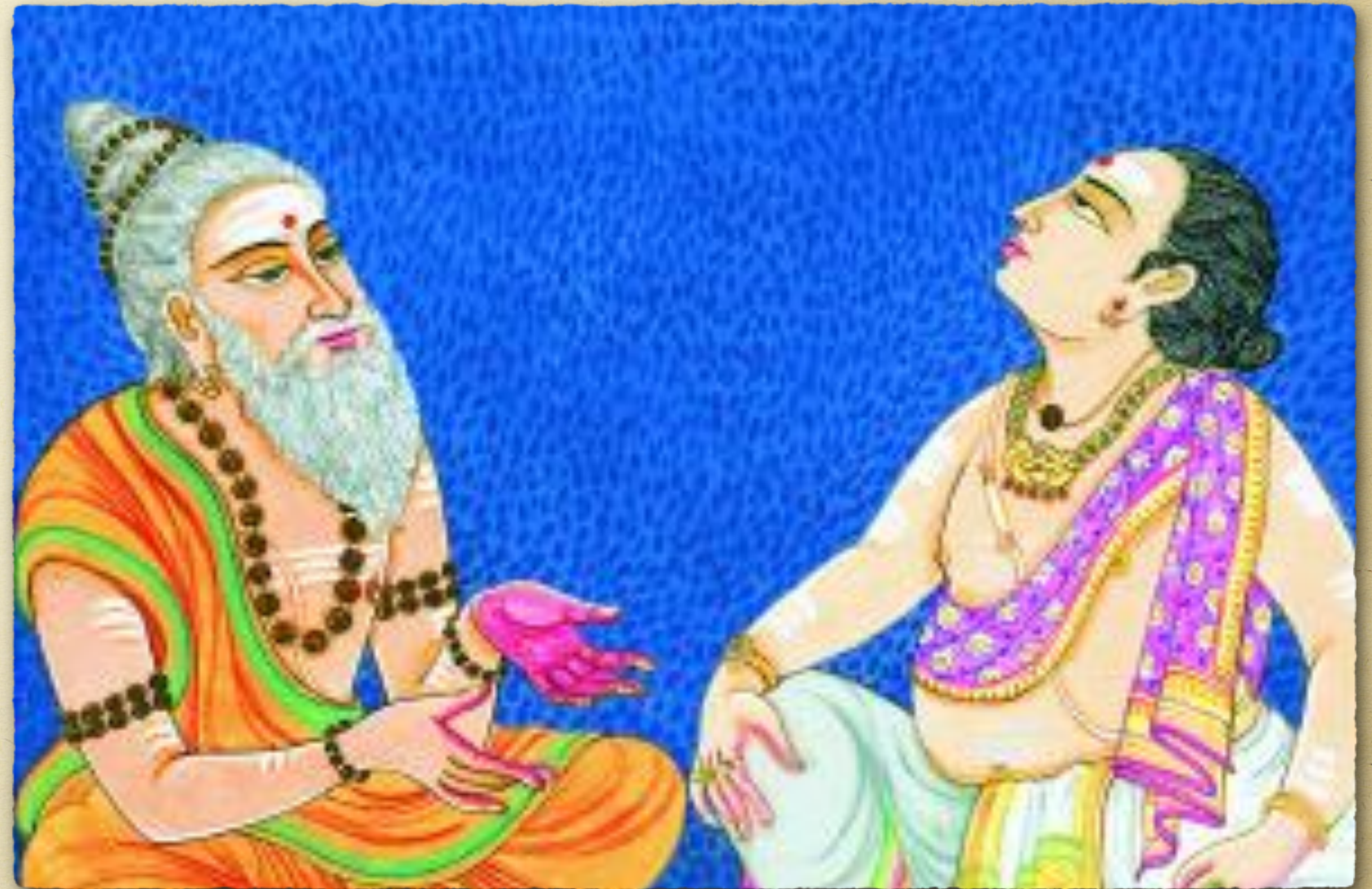
Preparation for meditation

Gurudeva gave us a system called
“preparation for meditation.”

It is a series of breathing and mental
exercises that quiets our mind and
directs our awareness inward.

Using the same series in reverse
returns you to normal consciousness.
Going in should take about one-third of
your allotted time.

The actual meditation should take about
half of the time, and coming out should
take one-sixth.



Gurudeva explains...

Throughout your inner investigations in meditation, cling to the philosophical principle that the mind doesn't move. Thoughts are stationary within the mind, and only awareness moves.

It flows from one thought to another, as the free citizen of the world travels through each country, each city, not attaching himself anywhere.



Steps to go into Meditation

1. Posture
 2. Body heat
 3. Breath
 4. Life force
 5. Power of the spine
 6. Withdrawal
 7. Pure awareness
-



1. Posture

If you are able, sit on the floor with your legs crossed, either in full or half lotus.

Place your hands in your lap with the right hand resting on the left and the tips of your thumbs touching softly.

You may also sit on a cushion, on your knees, or in a chair.

Sit upright with your shoulders back, spine straight and the head balanced on top of the spine.

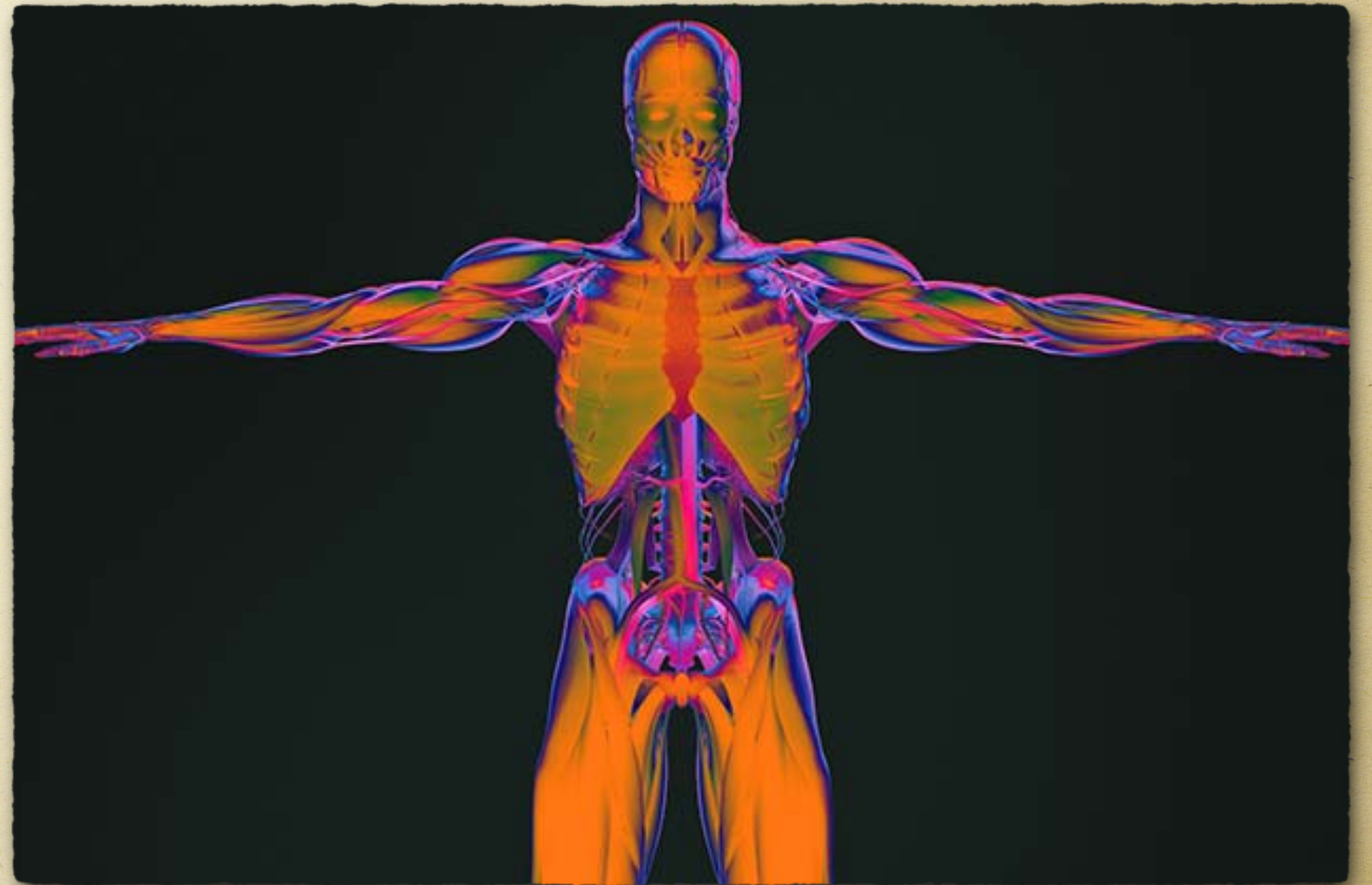
You should feel poised and comfortable.



2. Body Heat

Feel the warmth of your body, your head, your chest, your feet.

Become conscious of heat radiating out from your skin.



3. Breath

The Breathe through your nose, not through your mouth. You should breathe from the diaphragm, the muscle at the bottom of your rib cage just above your abdomen.

Your stomach should move in and out as you breathe. Don't breathe by expanding and contracting your chest. That kind of breathing makes it difficult to be calm.

As you inhale, slowly count to nine and hold one count.

Then count to nine again as you exhale, softly contracting the abdomen as you expel air. Then hold one count.

At first, you may be more comfortable counting only to five or six.



4. Feel the life force

Next feel the nerves within your body.

Feel the nerves in your face, in your hands, in your feet.

Feel the energy, the life force flowing through those nerves.



5. The power of the spine

Now move your spine slightly this is the only time in the meditation you should move at all.

This will help you focus on your spine and the energy that flows within it.

Try not to be aware of anything else, just the spine.

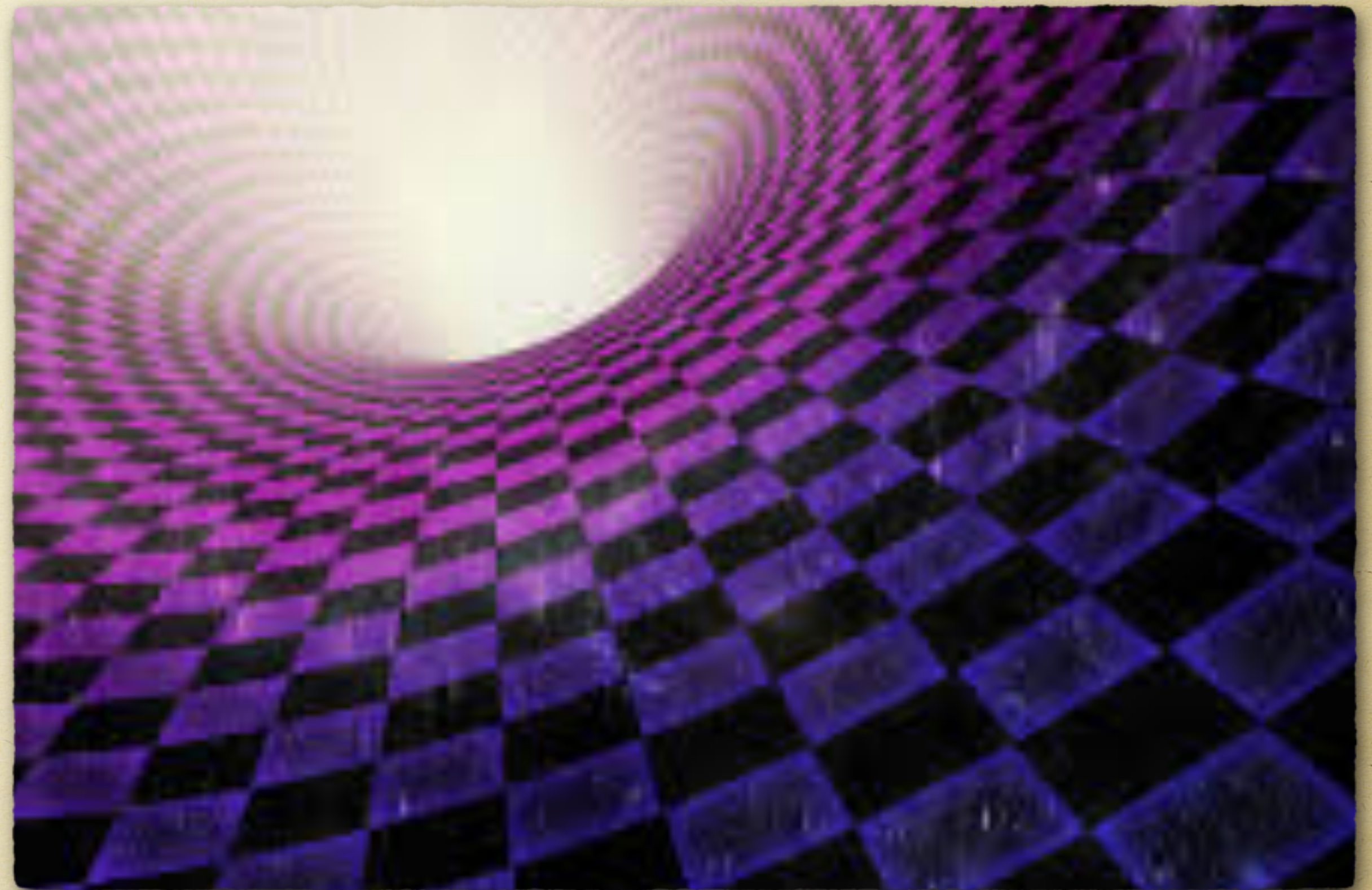


6. Withdrawal

Draw the energy from the body inward.
On the first in-breath, become aware of
your left leg, all the way to your toes.

On the out-breath, slowly pull the
energy of the left leg into your spine.

Do the same with the other leg, each
arm and finally the torso.

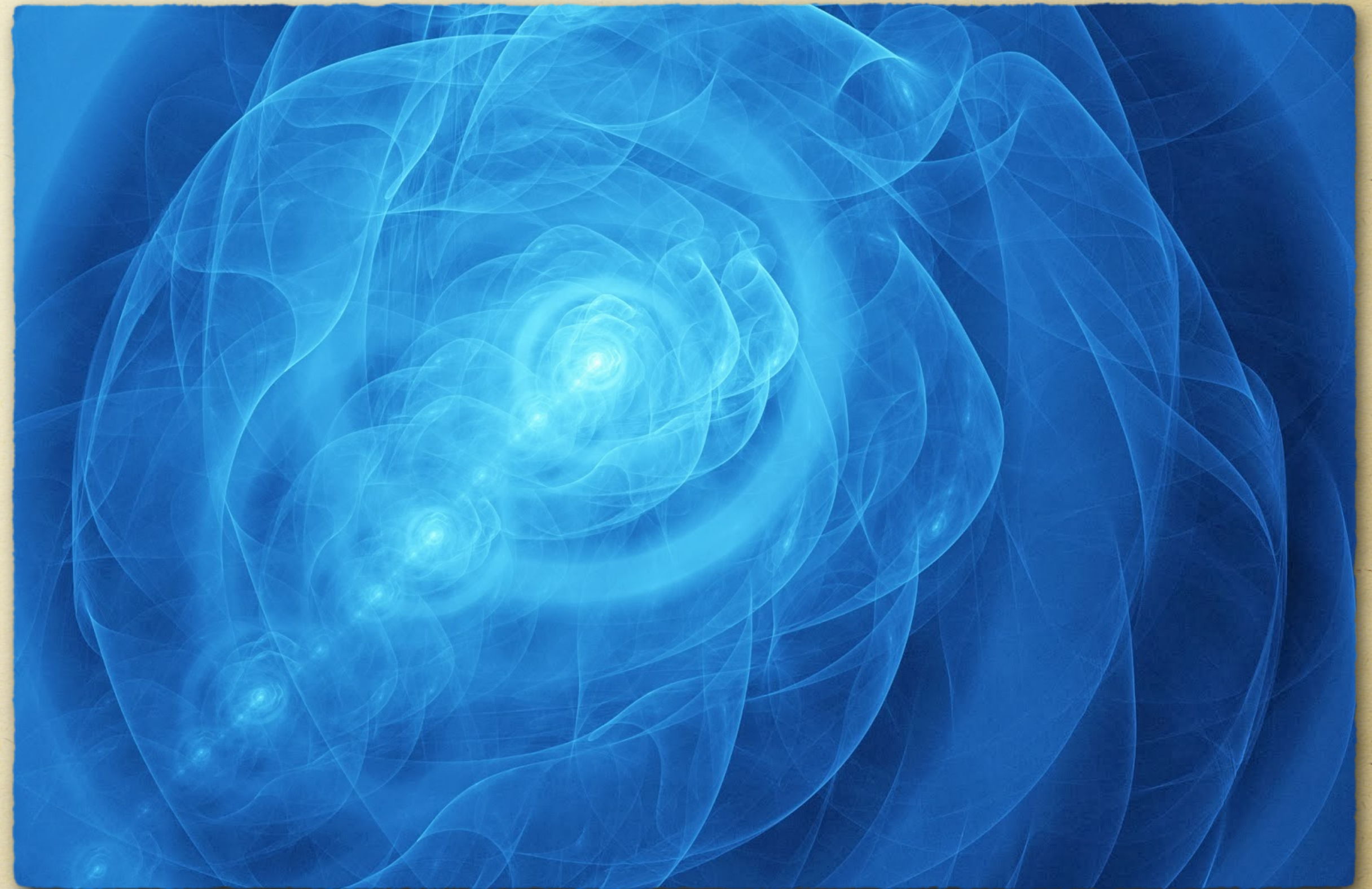


7. Pure awareness

At this stage, you should have little awareness of your body.

Now become aware that you are aware.
Then be aware of awareness and nothing else.

Hold this state as long as you can.



Meditate on a subject of your choice.

With the body relaxed and the mind quieted, you are ready to focus on the day's meditation. It could be a problem you are working on, a decision you want to ponder or something that interests you. But this isn't a time to think, that is, to logically move from one thought to another. Instead, you want to concentrate in a general way on the issue, and wait for some new understanding to occur. So instead of thinking, keep the mind quiet and wait for the next insight, which will come when your mind is open. In this way, you can tap into your superconscious mind.



Or Meditate on Five Forms of Siva Consciousness

1. Prana
 2. Shakti
 3. Darshana
 4. Jyoti
 5. Nada
-



1. Vital Breath: prana

Concentrate only on your in- breath and out-breath.

Try to experience them as Siva's will within your body, then as the pulse of the universe, divine will in action.



2. All-Pervasive Energy: shakti

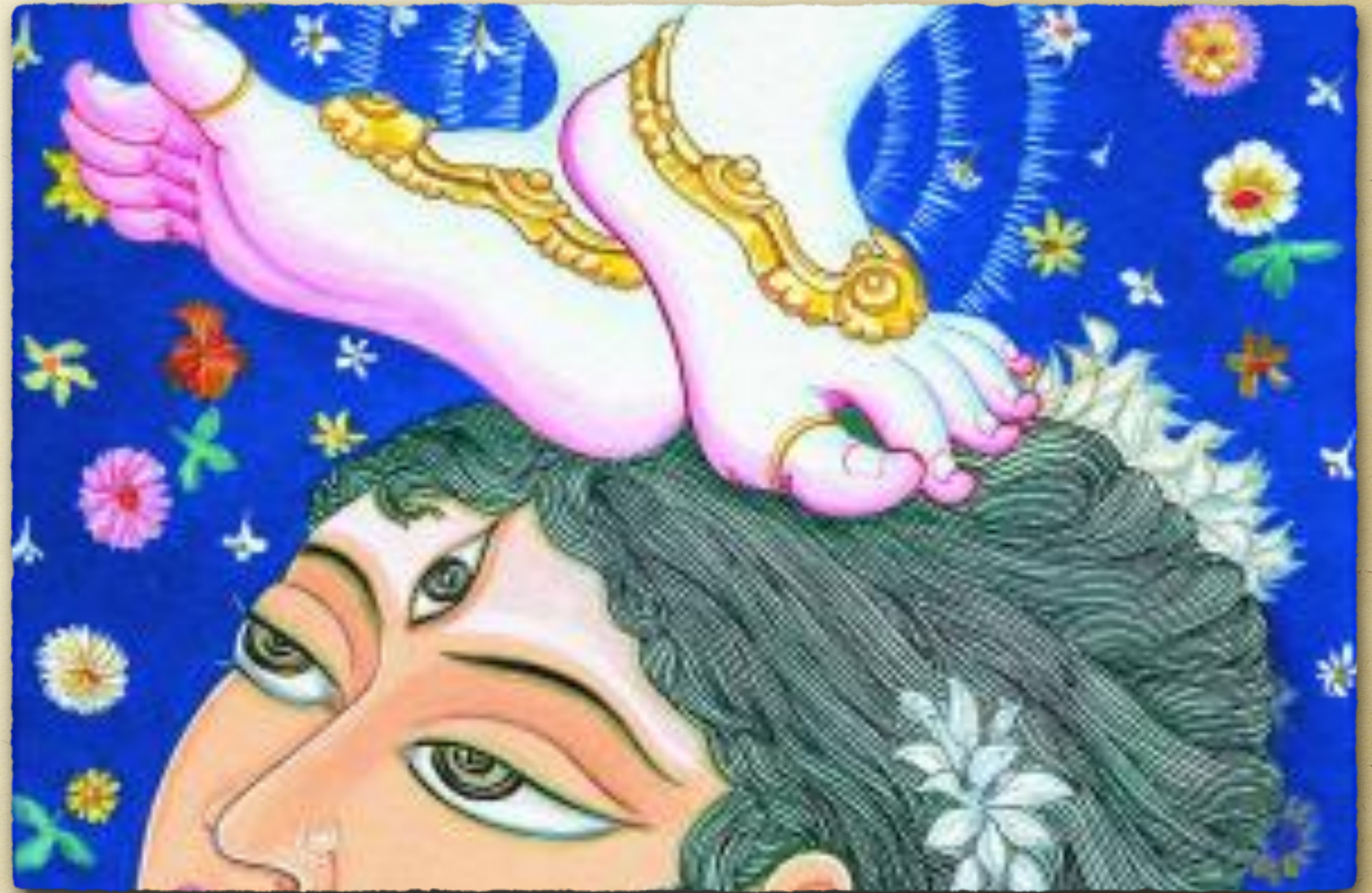
Become conscious of the flow of life
within your body.

Try to see this same universal energy
within every living thing.



3. Manifest Sacred Form: darshana

Hold in your mind a sacred form, such as Nataraja, Sivalinga or your satguru, and try to experience that form as Siva Himself.



4.Inner Light: jyoti

Look within your mind as if you were
looking at an inner TV screen.

Remove the images and thoughts and
you are left only with light.

Concentrate on that light.



5. Sacred Sound: nada

Listen to the constant high- pitched ee sounding in your head, like a humming swarm of bees.

Usually this can be heard first in one ear, then the other.

Try to balance the sounds until the ee sound is centered in the head.



Coming out of Meditation

Reverse the seven steps

When you are finished meditating, reverse the steps you took to go within.

Feel the spine, then the energy of the spine returning out to the parts of the body.

Feel the nerves of the body, then your breath.

Finally, become aware of the body's warmth, then your posture.

Open your eyes, chant "AUM" three times and your meditation is complete.

Every time we go within, our life is enriched.

Gurudeva said the only bad meditation is the one you did not do.



QUESTIONS for Lesson 47



47.1 The finest times to meditate are just after sunrise and sunset.

- True
- False

47.2 The period of meditation to begin with should be (Check the correct answer)

- A. From ten minutes to one-half hour
- B. For one minute
- C. For two hours

47.3 Gurudeva's system of meditation is called (Check the correct answer)

- A. Sitting still
- B. Beginning to meditate
- C. Preparation for meditation

47.4 Number in the correct order from 1 - 7 the steps for going in to meditation.

- ___ Withdrawal
- ___ Body Heat
- ___ Pure Awareness
- ___ Posture
- ___ Power of the Spine
- ___ Breath
- ___ Life Force

47.5 You can tap into your superconscious mind by (Check the incorrect answer)

- A. Thinking extensively about the issue
- B. Concentrating in a general way on the issue
- C. Keeping the mind quiet and waiting for the next insight