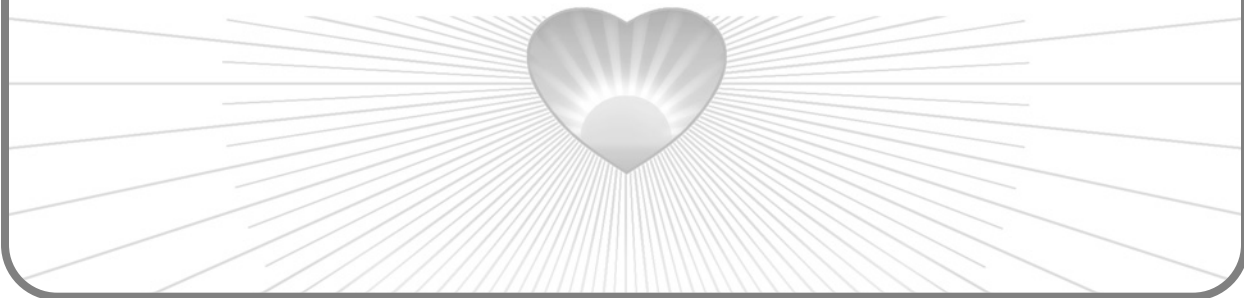


Part Five: Entering the Heart

Pages 159–92

*The heart is the place of great encounters.
It is the place where we meet our Real Self and where we meet God.
Whenever this encounter takes place, there is an alchemical transformation
and we are never again the same.*



KEEPING IN TOUCH

- *Are your experiences with people different because of the book study?*
 - *Is it helping you feel more like your real self?*

The profound and experiential nature of this final section lends itself to combining discussion points and Heart Perspectives Worksheet exercises. Understanding and applying these concepts can have tremendous impact on your life. May you enter the lotus of your heart!

1. The Secret Chamber

What do the world's mystics say about the heart?
(pp. 161–63)

- ◆ Nexus between worlds
- ◆ Seat of higher consciousness
- ◆ Most important energy center [chakra]
- ◆ Sea of light



Secret Chamber of the Heart

What is the secret chamber of the heart and where is it? (pp. 163–64)

- ◆ Antechamber within the heart—other metaphors?



© 2005 Jupiter Images Corporation

- ◆ Doorway to cosmic dimensions
- ◆ Similar descriptions from different religious traditions

Who do you meet there and what do they give you?
(pp. 164–65)

Going to the Secret Chamber (p. 165)

Think of a situation where you would like to have unerring direction or even just a deeper connection with your Higher Self. Take a few moments to pause and enter your heart, and then say silently or aloud:

*O Beloved One, I am so grateful for your guidance,
illumination and love. Teach me. Direct the course of my life
and show me the next steps I must take.*

Once you acknowledge the masterful presence within, you can retreat to your secret chamber at key points in your day and commune with that presence. Remember to listen. The answer may not come immediately, but will come at the right time.

2. A Spark of the Divine

What have mystics said about the portion of God within you? (pp. 166–68)

- ◆ Divine spark—sacred flame
- ◆ Apostle Paul, Hindus, Jews, Saint Catherine of Siena, Meister Eckhart, Buddhists
- ◆ “Threefold flame”

What’s the difference between the flame in saints, adepts and masters East and West and the flame in other people? How can you make your flame like theirs? (pp. 168–69)

- ◆ Size and intensity
- ◆ Exercise of heart, head and hand



3. Heart-Centered Prayer (pp. 169–71)

Meditation and communion in the secret chamber of the heart is a very private experience. The following meditation helps you to withdraw your mind from external affairs and place your attention on the presence of God within, the Inner Light, the real source of your being. When you go within by devotion and love, you contact the inner flame and connect with the Universal Spirit.

In doing this you become drenched with light—renewed, refreshed and replenished—so you can give more light to those who need it. You build up your reservoir of love and access the wisdom of your heart to find solutions to knotty problems.

Combining meditation with spoken prayer that comes from a heart on fire with love activates the fruit of meditation upon the Divine and makes it physical. The process begins with entering your heart.

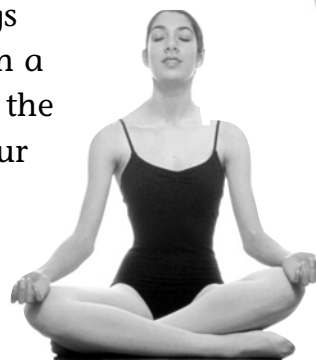


Meditation for Entering the Secret Chamber

Pages 172–76

Enter your sacred space.

This is a sacred ritual you can do any time. When you do this alone, find a quiet place where you will be undisturbed. You can sit in a comfortable chair with your legs uncrossed and your feet flat on the floor or sit in a lotus posture. Keep your spine erect in honor of the Spirit within you. You may want to separate your hands, cup them and place them on your lap. Cupping your hands symbolizes that you are offering yourself as a chalice: *“Pour thyself into me, O living Spirit.”*



© 2005 Jupiter Images Corporation

Center in your heart.

Once you are seated, close your eyes, take some deep breaths and withdraw your attention from all outer circumstances and cares of this world. Each time you exhale, consciously release the tensions of the day. Let go of the worries, concerns and preoccupations. Withdraw your attention from problems at home and at work, from physical and emotional burdens. Set them all aside for the moment.

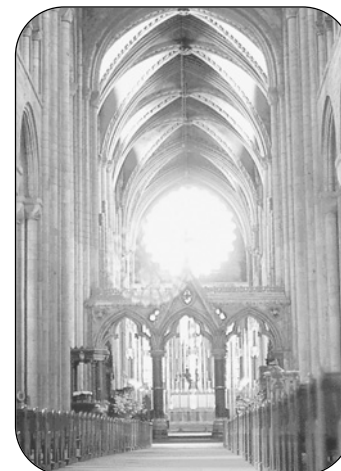


Now center all of your energy and attention on your heart chakra in the center of your chest. See in your mind's eye the intensity of the sun at noonday. Transfer the picture of that fiery sphere of light to the center of your chest cavity. You are aware of nothing else but this great sphere of light.

Take another deep breath. As you exhale, visualize yourself gently descending into the sphere of light, energy and consciousness that is your radiant heart chakra. You are entering it entirely, moving farther away from the limiting dimensions of time and space into a timeless, spaceless dimension.

Enter the secret chamber.

As you travel deeper and deeper into the inner recesses of your being, visualize yourself entering the secret chamber of the heart chakra. Visualize yourself walking into this chamber as you would enter a mighty cathedral, a private chapel, a beautiful synagogue, mosque, or Buddhist or Hindu temple.



As you continue your meditation on the secret chamber of the heart, begin to feel the divine stillness of perfect love. This is an inner experience, as though you were alone in the cosmos with your Creator.

Visualize and feel your divine spark.

As you take your place within the secret chamber, direct your attention to the sacred flame, the divine spark, that burns upon the central altar. The altar of your heart is the place you go for “alteration”—for transformation, for alchemy. We come to this altar to leave behind an outworn portion of ourselves—the “old man,” as Paul called it, which is our old habits and patterns—and to garner a greater portion of the light of our Higher Self, the “new man.”



Fold your hands at the center of your chest, at the point of your heart chakra. Feel the beating of your heart and see, with your inner eye, the flame that is your divine spark pulsating on that altar within the secret chamber of your heart. You can picture this flame as having three parts, representing the three primary divine attributes. On your left is the blue flame, representing divine power. In the middle is the yellow flame, embodying divine wisdom. On your right is the pink flame, which radiates divine love.

Greet your inner teacher.

Here in the secret chamber, before your personal altar, you approach your inner teacher and mentor, your Higher Self. As you stand before your altar, bow before the sacred flame and then before your inner guide. Each time you do so, it is your opportunity to offer a heartfelt prayer, such as:

*Almighty God, I bow before the
flame you have placed in my heart,
which is a portion of yourself.
My beloved Inner Christ, Inner Buddha,
Inner Light, show me this day what
you would have me do with the power,
wisdom and love of this divine spark
so that I may be your heart, your head
and your hand in action—
my heart, thy heart beating as one.*

To increase the intensity of the fire that burns within, take a moment to send an intense arc of love and gratitude from your heart to God and to feel the return current of that love.



4. Making It a Reality

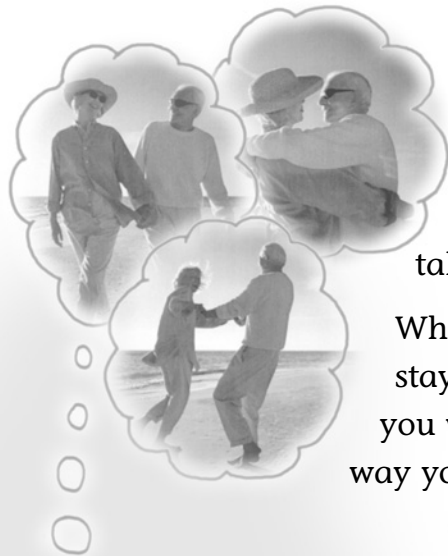
Express the inner fire of your devotion and gratitude.

Prayers, affirmations and mantras are a spoken meditation of your heart. They are a celebration of your spirit. They activate the fruits of meditation and make them physical. As you say every word, feel the spiritual resonance of that word inside your heart.

What enhances spirituality is the intention, the motive and the devotion you pour into your prayers. The quality of heart you infuse into everything you say and do is what creates the alchemy of change.

Creatively visualize while you pray.

You can consecrate your prayers to a specific outcome, such as the resolution of a challenging situation at work, at home or on the world scene. Visualizations are like a magnet that attracts the creative energies of Spirit to fill in the blueprint you hold in mind.



Use your imagination to see, as if on a movie screen, the desired outcome of your prayers, the resolution of the situations you are praying for. As you recite your prayers, affirmations or mantras, see the actions described by each word taking place right before your eyes.

While you hold the pictures of these outcomes in mind, stay open. Prayers aren't always answered in the way you would expect, but they are always answered in the way you need most.

The following meditations and prayers are from many of the world's spiritual traditions. Each is unique and approaches the concept of Spirit from a different angle. You can give any or all of them, as your heart leads you.

Prayers to the Flame in the Heart

Visualization for the prayer "I AM the Light of the Heart"

Imagine thousands of sunbeams going forth from your heart. See intense fiery-pink laser beams penetrate and dissolve any darkness, despair or



depression within yourself, within loved ones or within any who need the light from your heart. See these rays of loving-kindness going forth to break down all barriers to the success of your relationships, your family, your spiritual growth, your career, your community and your nation as you give the prayer aloud.

I AM the Light of the Heart

*I AM the light of the heart
Shining in the darkness of being
And changing all into the golden treasury
Of the mind of Christ.*

*I AM projecting my love
Out into the world
To erase all errors
And to break down all barriers.*

*I AM the power of infinite love,
Amplifying itself
Until it is victorious,
World without end!*

I AM a Son / a Daughter of God

I AM a Son / a Daughter of God. This day I AM charging the substance within my heart that is mine to command with the flame of love from the hand of Almighty God.

I send it forth from my being everywhere in all directions to perform the perfect work of God and to return to me with all the divine love which I AM sending forth.

Holy Christ Flame within Me

Holy Christ Self above me,
Thou balance of my soul,
Let thy blessed radiance
Descend and make me whole.*

*Thy flame within me ever blazes,
Thy peace about me ever raises,
Thy love protects and holds me,
Thy dazzling light enfolds me.
I AM thy threefold radiance,
I AM thy living presence
Expanding, expanding, expanding now.*

*Holy Christ flame within me,
Come, expand thy triune light;
Flood my being with the essence
Of the pink, blue, gold and white.*

*Thy flame within me ever blazes,
Thy peace about me ever raises,
Thy love protects and holds me,
Thy dazzling light enfolds me.
I AM thy threefold radiance,
I AM thy living presence
Expanding, expanding, expanding now.*

*Holy lifeline to my Presence,
Friend and brother ever dear,
Let me keep thy holy vigil,
Be thyself in action here.*

*Thy flame within me ever blazes,
Thy peace about me ever raises,
Thy love protects and holds me,
Thy dazzling light enfolds me.
I AM thy threefold radiance,
I AM thy living presence
Expanding, expanding, expanding now.*



*The "Holy Christ Self" is another name for your Higher Self. The "Holy Christ flame" is your divine spark, the threefold flame that abides within the secret chamber of your heart.

Meditation in the Island of the Heart

Djwal Kul

To enter into the garden of the heart is to enter a chamber that exists in the mind of God which can come into being as the kingdom of God within you through meditation and through visualization. . . .

The Eastern devotee sees the earth transformed into jewellike crystals. Emeralds, diamonds, rubies compose the island in the midst of the nectar sea; and the essence of the Spirit Most Holy is the fragrance from flowering trees. You should also use your imagination to create this royal scene. . . .



© 2005 Jupiter Images Corporation

It is well to be specific. Therefore, draw a specific outline in your mind of this bejeweled island suspended in a glistening sea. Then see yourself walking from the shores of the sea through the tropical trees and vegetation to the center and highest promontory of the island.

Tropical birds and flowers of delicate and brilliant colors make the scene more vivid. And by and by you hear the songs of the birds as they sing the song celestial and key the soul to the frequencies of that plane where the ascending triangle of Mater [matter] meets the descending triangle of Spirit.

When you come to the center of your island in the sun, visualize specifically the platform and the throne that are consecrated for the image and the sacred presence of the master. . . . [Envision a throne] that is richly carved, gold leafed, and inlaid with precious and semiprecious stones, and visualize upon it a velvet cushion. . . .



As you contemplate the blue-skyey dome and this place prepared to receive the Lord, give the following invocation for the integration of your soul with the consciousness of the Christ and its perfect outpicturing in the hidden chamber of the heart.

Island of the Heart Prayer

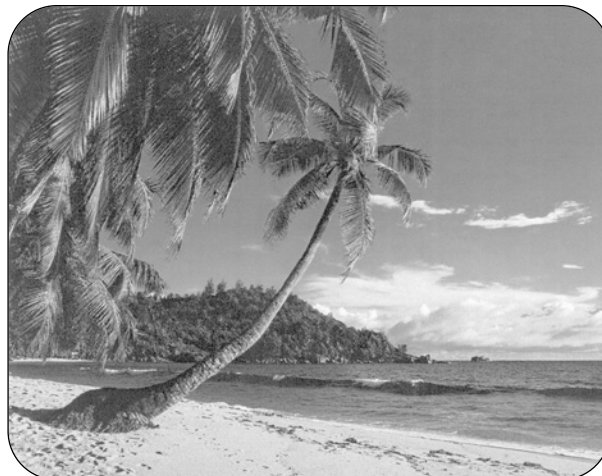
Djwal Kul

*O Lord my God,
Come and talk and walk with me
In this my paradise garden,
My island in the sea!*

*Come, O Lord, in the cool of the day.
Come! For I have prepared the way,
And my offering is the sacrifice of the lesser self
Upon the altar of the heart.*

*I come before thy presence, Lord.
I see thee in thy essence, Lord.
I am thy omnipresence, Lord.
Teach me how to be thyself,
How to walk the earth
As heart and head and hand
Responding to thy will at thy command.*

*O Infinite One,
Thou God of all above, below,
It is thyself that I would know.
Come unto me, come into me,
O God of love!
Let me dwell with thee, in thee.*





Meditations in the Lotus of the Heart



Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood:

The ancient yogis believed that there was an actual center of spiritual consciousness, called "the lotus of the heart," situated between the abdomen and the thorax, which could be revealed in deep meditation. They claimed that it had the form of a lotus and that it shone with an inner light. It was said to be "beyond sorrow," since those who saw it were filled with an extraordinary sense of peace and joy. . . .

If the body is thought of as a busy and noisy city, then we can imagine that, in the middle of this city, there is a little shrine, and that, within this shrine, the Atman, our real nature, is present. No matter what is going on in the streets outside, we can always enter that shrine and worship. It is always open.



Kaivalya Upanishad:

The supreme heaven shines in the lotus of the heart. Those who



struggle and aspire may enter there. Retire into solitude. Seat yourself on a clean spot in an erect posture, with the head and neck in a straight line. Control all sense-organs. Bow down in devotion to your teacher. Then enter the lotus of the heart and meditate there on the presence of Brahman*—the pure, the infinite, the blissful.

Chandogya Upanishad:

Within the city of Brahman, which is the body, there is the heart, and within the heart there is a little house. This house has the shape of a lotus, and within it dwells that which is to be sought after, inquired about, and realized. . . .

The lotus of the heart, where Brahman resides in all his glory—that, and not the body, is the true city of Brahman. Brahman, dwelling therein, is untouched by any deed, ageless, deathless, free from grief, free from hunger and from thirst. His desires are right desires, and his desires are fulfilled.



*Brahman is the Ultimate Reality, the Absolute.



Prayers in the Lotus of the Heart

Lead Us from the Unreal to the Real
The Upanishads

*There is a light that shines
 Beyond all things on earth, beyond us all,
 Beyond the heavens, beyond the highest,
 the very highest heavens.
 This is the light that shines in our heart!*

*O Thou that art manifest, be Thou manifest to us:
 From the unreal, lead us to the Real;
 From darkness lead us to Light;
 From death lead us to immortality.*



The following is an ancient and popular Buddhist mantra for compassion. The jewel in the lotus has been interpreted as the unfolding of the jewel of spirituality or enlightenment within the lotus of awakened consciousness, the wedding of wisdom and compassion, and the awakening of the Buddha (or Christ) within the heart.

Om Mani Padme Hum

(Pronounced Om Mah-nee Pud-may Hoom)

Translation: Hail to the jewel in the lotus!

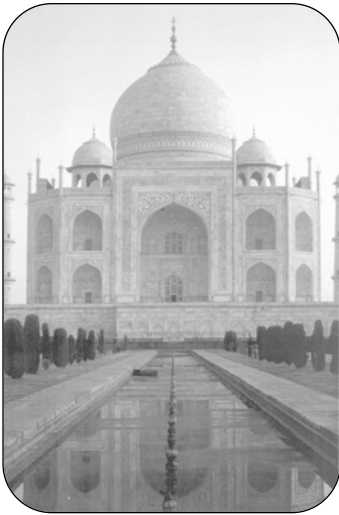


Meditations on the Inner Palace

Teresa of Avila:

Consider what St. Augustine says, that he sought [God] in many places but found Him ultimately within himself. Do you think it matters little for a soul with a wandering mind to understand this truth and see that there is no need to go to heaven in order to speak with one's Eternal Father or find delight in Him? Nor is there any need to shout. However softly we speak, He is near enough to hear us. . . .

Let us imagine that within us is an extremely rich palace, built entirely of gold and precious stones; in sum, built for a lord such as this. Imagine, too, as is indeed so, that you have a part to play in order for the palace to be so beautiful; for there is no edifice as beautiful as is a soul pure and full of virtues. The greater the virtues the more resplendent the jewels. Imagine, also, that in this palace dwells this mighty King who has been gracious enough to become your Father; and that He is seated upon an extremely valuable throne, which is your heart.



. . . All of this imagining is necessary that we may truly understand that within us lies something incomparably more precious than what we see outside ourselves. . . . I consider it impossible for us to pay so much attention to worldly things if we take the care to remember we have a Guest such as this within us, for we then see how lowly these things are next to what we possess within ourselves. . . .

. . . What a marvelous thing, that He who would fill a thousand worlds and many more with His grandeur would enclose Himself in something so small! In fact, since He is Lord He is free to do what He wants, and since He loves us He adapts Himself to our size.

The Bhagavad Gita:

God dwells in the hearts of all beings, beloved, your God dwells in your heart and his power of wonder moves all things . . . whirling them onwards on the stream of time. . . .

I have given you words of vision and wisdom more secret than hidden mysteries. Ponder them in the silence of your heart, and then, in freedom, do your will.

Inner Palace Prayers

May I See You Today Mother Teresa

Dearest Lord, may I see you today and every day in the person of your sick, and, whilst nursing them, minister unto you.

Though you hide yourself behind the unattractive disguise of the irritable, the exacting, the unreasonable, may I still recognize you, and say: "Jesus, my patient, how sweet it is to serve you."...

Lord, increase my faith, bless my efforts and work, now and for evermore. Amen.

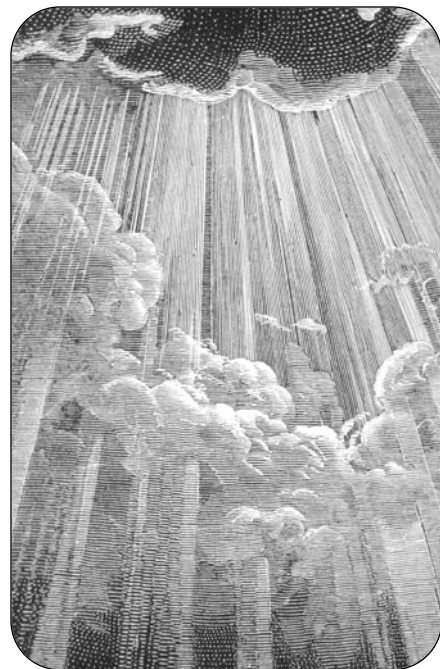
Light, Give Us Light Catherine of Siena

*O eternal Trinity, my sweet love!
You, light, give us light.
You, wisdom, give us wisdom.
You, supreme strength, strengthen us.*

*Today, eternal God,
let our cloud be dissipated
so that we may perfectly know and
follow your Truth in truth,
with a free and simple heart.*

*O fire ever blazing!
The soul who comes to know herself in you
finds your greatness wherever she turns,
even in the tiniest things,
in people and in all created things,
for in all of them she sees your power
and wisdom and mercy.*

*You, light, make the heart simple,
not two-faced.*



*You make it big, not stingy—
so big that it has room
in its loving charity for everyone.
Do not be slow, most kind Father,
to turn the eye of your mercy
on the world.*

*I Am Your Opus
Hildegard of Bingen*

*God says:
Ever
you are
before my eyes.*

*God, I am your opus.
Before the beginning of time,
already then,
I was in your mind. . . .*

*Through God I have living spirit.
Through God I have life and movement.
Through God I learn, I find my path.*

*If I call in truth, this God and
Lord directs my steps;
setting my feet to the rhythm of
his precepts.
I run like a deer that seeks its spring.
I have my home on high.*



© 2005 Jupiter Images Corporation

Grant Us to Love Muhammad

O Lord, grant us to love Thee; grant that we may love those that love Thee; grant that we may do the deeds that win Thy love. Make the love of Thee to be dearer to us than ourselves, than our families, than wealth, and even than cool water.



May I Become an Inexhaustible Treasure Shantideva

*May I be the doctor and the medicine
And may I be the nurse
For all sick beings in the world
Until everyone is healed. . . .*

*May I become an inexhaustible treasure
For those who are poor and destitute;
May I turn into all things they could need
And may these be placed close beside them. . . .*

*And when anyone encounters me
May it never be meaningless for him. . . .
May all who say bad things to me
Or cause me any other harm,
And those who mock and insult me,
Have the fortune to fully awaken.*

May All Be Blessed with Peace *the Sutta-Nipata*

*May creatures all abound in weal and peace;
May all be blessed with peace always;
All creatures weak or strong,
All creatures great and small,
Creatures unseen or seen,
Dwelling afar or near,
Born or awaiting birth,
—May all be blessed with peace!*

The following is the last line of the popular Heart Sutra, given daily by many Buddhists. This mantra is said to allay all suffering:

Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

(Pronounced Gah-tay Gah-tay Para-gah-tay Para-sahm-gah-tay Boh-dee Svah-hah)

Gone, gone, gone beyond, gone wholly beyond—
Enlightenment, hail! (or Awakening fulfilled!)



"Star of the Hero" by Nicholas Roerich. Nicholas Roerich Museum, New York. Reproduced by permission.