

SIX

THE POWER OF CREATIVITY

Meditation 06: Self creation

*Whoever undertakes to create soon finds himself
engaged in creating himself.*

Harold Rosenberg

*As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to
remake the world—that is the myth of the atomic age—as in
being able to remake ourselves.*

Mahatma Gandhi

Creation, self creation, recreation, re-creation. When it comes to the Self or Soul we are at the heart of the matter, where we explore the nature of mind, thought, feeling and their relationship to action. (We're here to change our actions, remember?) We're dealing with levels of consciousness above or below the mind, and only by stilling the mind and taking it out of gear will we get to those levels where the understanding comes directly from experience.

But the process of balancing the Ecology of the Soul starts at the mind and intellect level, where we do our thinking. We focus first of all on our 'mental ecology', by which I mean the inner world we inhabit, the nature of our thought patterns, emotions, imagination, hopes, fears, ambitions, delights, preoccupations. That mental ecology affects and is affected by the 'real', ie the physical, world. Then we dig deeper and come to an awareness of our *spiritual* as distinct from our *mental* ecology – the ecology of the Soul, of which your mind is but a part.

It takes a lot of meditation practice to get to the place where you have literally no thought, but by the time you get there – and on the journey even – you are abundantly aware that You. Are. Not. Your. Mind. You have been watching Your mind, getting the measure of it, starting on the process of controlling it; You are something different from it. You are separating out the levels of your consciousness, becoming aware of the difference between the Observer and the Observed, and which one is really You. You are a unit of non-physical, conscient energy that is aware of itself, that is itself awareness, that thinks and feels, is light. A light burning, shining, glowing, without ever consuming itself.

In this powerful process of creating, or re-creating, your Self, you unleash the true Power of Creativity in your Self. First, by refining your understanding of which bit of your consciousness does what; then turning that understanding into real life experience; then feeding that experience back to the ‘thoughts and feelings’ level where it automatically triggers the change, or creation, process. ‘Automatically’ doesn’t mean it can be done without effort, but it does mean that as your consciousness changes, so your thoughts, feelings and attitudes change. You need mental and spiritual power to do this, which is precisely what study of the Ecology of the Soul will give you. This is all about revitalising your original, natural, innate powers. By tapping into, in this case, your power of Creativity, you encourage it, increase it, enhance it, nurture it, expand it – renew it. Like exercising muscles you never knew you had.

The process of creating (re-creating) our Selves and hence our actions demands a clear sense of the difference between the pure, peaceful, powerful spiritual Self, the true You, and its ordinary, everyday sub-divisions which connect directly to action; where the power comes from, and where it goes.

The thousands of inspirational, motivational, meditation or self-improvement texts that have been written and read over generations, however diverse their philosophies, all have one thing in common: a focus on the power of thought. Deep or shallow, they teach that the mind is enormously powerful, that its thinking is mostly uncontrolled and that to control it will break us through to the experience of the true Self – or to the health, wealth and happiness we feel is our birthright – or to both. The power of the mind (some say) will make everything you desire come true. But there is also the great trick we have allowed our minds to play on us, making us mistake our bodies for our Selves. The power of the mind is a means of escape from this illusion, freeing itself from its own waywardness.

How, practically, can we break the old thought moulds and create new ones, which lead to new actions, new behaviour? For me, the teachings of Raja Yoga make the most sense of this profoundly powerful subject, because they break down the ‘faculties’ of the Soul, if you like, into three: Mind, Intellect and Sanskars (inadequately translated into English as ‘Impressions’, or even ‘Personality’, which is I think a little misleading). They are not separate departments as such, more like aspects of the conscient unit of non-physical energy that is You the soul, working on different levels. ‘Just as electrical energy produces warmth, sound or light depending on the device through which it passes, similarly, the energy of consciousness functions through three different but closely connected faculties, referred to respectively by the terms mind, intellect, and personality.’ [<http://www.bkwsu.org/whatwedo/courses/fcirym/topics.htm/the-soul.htm>].

Through the Mind, says the teaching, one imagines, thinks and forms ideas. The thought process is the basis of all emotions, desires and sensations. The 'Intellect' is the critical faculty, the one that carries the power of understanding, reasoning, analysis, judgement, assessment. It is what we use to memorise, discriminate and make decisions – not to be confused with the brain, which is the physical 'control panel' by which the Soul's non-physical activity is brought into the physical. Soul sends messages to brain, brain sends messages to body.

The third and most 'difficult' faculty gives an understanding of how we come to be who we are in the everyday, personal life sense, with our accumulated baggage of history, physical identity, attitudes, relationships, circumstances and behaviour. 'Sanskars' or 'sankaras' is the Hindi word used to describe this aspect of consciousness; the recorded results of all our actions through all of our lives. Essentially, the concept takes the universal law of Karma and puts it into a useable framework for self-examination and behaviour change.

Karma means, simply, action. Everything you do or have ever done, in this and all your lives, leaves an impression on the Soul, cumulatively creating the unique individual that is You. Action creates reaction, which creates more action – we all know this if we've ever had a habit that we've tried to control or stop. The more you do it, the more you do it. Do it less, and the impulse to do it fades away. The Law of Karma, the universal law of action and reaction, is Newton's third law of the physical universe: 'For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction'. It's also the spiritual or ethical law: 'As you sow, so shall you reap,' 'You get what you give', etc etc.

But the intricacies of cause and effect over thousands of generations are so unfathomable, it's a waste of mental and spiritual energy to try. Here and now, we can apply this beautiful knowledge to the job in hand – changing ourselves back to the pure, powerful, peaceful Soul that we once were. If we create new actions, we create our Selves anew. And a newly created Self will create new actions. Which in turn feed back to the Self-creation process. Or re-creation, because that is our original state. Or recreation, because let's not forget amongst all this mental and intellectual activity that our original state is one of bliss, delight, joy, love, happiness, power and peace. And that is recreation that we all need, God knows.