

Self Inquiry Dyad Instructions- 40 Minute Periods

Self inquiry dyads are an expedient way to create a state of concentration, attention, equanimity, and inner surrender within the mind. These are the conditions which make kensho/awakening more likely to happen and bring about the clearing of samskaras (conditioned mind patterns) which obscure our true nature.

Instructions:

- Remain silent during all times except when you are doing the inquiry. Chatting will activate the mind.
- At the beginning of the dyad the only conversation needed is to establish which person will be a witness, and which will do the inquiry.
- The witness will connect to a genuine desire to know who their partner is. Wanting to know who your partner is, is just as important as wanting to know who YOU are. If you have no real interest in your partner and only want to inquire about YOU, then progress will be difficult or impossible. Finding out who you are, and finding out who others are, is one and the same thing.
- The witness says "Tell me who you are". Notice that **this is not a question, but an imperative**. Give the imperative exactly. Use this imperative as opposed to the question form "Who are you?". The imperative is a strong request or demand to convey who you truly are. It is not a question and is therefore not looking for a particular answer on the level of the mind.
- The witness listens without speaking or nodding, remaining neutral.

If you don't understand something then you can say "Can you clarify that please?". It is most important to actually listen and understand your partner. Don't space out or drift off, or engage in formulating your own response while you are listening to your partner.

Do not repeat the imperative- just say it once, with conviction. If your partner seems to be taking up a lot of time, that's OK. Do not interrupt them or remind them of the time.

- The person doing the inquiry will follow these steps:

1) Receive the imperative and intend to directly experience who you are. This means intending to directly experience the object or goal of awakening, or to awaken to your true nature. Be aware of I AM-ness, or pure consciousness beyond name and form. Intend to have a direct experience of your true nature. Take time to engage in this inquiry (do not bypass this part of the technique). If you start reporting phenomena immediately after receiving the imperative, it means you have bypassed the direct inquiry part of the technique.

Roughly half of the inquiry period should be intending to directly experience who you are, and half should be reporting what comes up.

[**Tip**] Instead of looking for awareness with the conditioned mind, simply recognize that it is already present.

2) **Remain open** to whatever comes up as a result of that intention to know your Self. Being open means not having preconceived ideas about who you are, or what will come up. This could be called “beginner’s mind” or “don’t know mind”. Do not reject, censor or judge anything that comes up as a result of the inquiry.

3) All material that comes up should be shared fully with your partner so that it can be cleared from the mind (by making it conscious through witnessing). Do not manufacture responses using the mind, but simply observe and report what authentically comes up within the entire self structure. The mind is being used as a reporting tool. Whatever beliefs, thoughts, emotions, feelings are running in the unconscious will start to come up. We don’t push them away, but don’t identify with them either. Share them, convey them completely to your partner ensuring that they understand you.

4) Distinguish between phenomena that comes up *as a result of inquiry*, and mundane phenomena. Avoid giving a “weather report” of sensations or mundane phenomena. Report only what has arisen as a result of intending to directly know who you are.

5) Bring consciousness to the use of words like “I, me, mine, myself”. Find out... is it true when you use these words?

6) The inquiry process:

When you intend to directly experience who you are, eyes can be open or closed. After receiving the imperative, some people turn attention inward for a period of time, closing their eyes. It is important that after inquiring, when it is time to share what comes up, that you re-establish eye contact. **Eye contact is an important part of the technique.** Do not share what is coming up with your eyes closed... connect with your partner!

7) Get your partner to really understand you, being as clear, open and free as possible. Do this without reference to your partner and without referring to anything they have said in past dyads. This is not a conversation.

8) Continue to share until you feel that the sharing has been completed. A typical sharing period is 5-6 minutes. There are no absolutes for the length of time. Notice if your mind generates thoughts of taking up too much attention (or feeling unworthy), or if it wants all of the attention. Try to have a balanced amount of sharing vs. witnessing with your partner. If one person seems to be doing more sharing than the other, then simply make that conscious.

9) Once you have finished sharing say "Thank you" and then switch roles. Now the inquirer becomes the witness and provides the imperative "Tell me who you are". You will continue to switch back and forth for the 40 minute period until the final bell is rung.

10) In this exercise we are changing our relationship to beliefs. LET EVERYTHING BE AS IT IS, reporting objectively. Don't believe your thoughts. Instead, observe them, report them, so that they no longer run unconsciously in the shadows. WHO IS AWARE OF BOTH THE WITNESS AND THE PHENOMENA BEING WITNESSED? Intend to directly experience that one.

11) If you feel like you are stuck- what is the most real thing for you at this moment?

It is OK if not much is coming up. How does that make you feel? Subtle is significant. Sometimes subtle beliefs will reveal themselves. Be free to express anything, even if it seems socially unacceptable. Don't push away thoughts and don't get caught up in thoughts (the middle way). The mind is just used as a reporting tool.

Most importantly, do not seek the true Self with the doing mind (the conditioned mind, the efforting mind). We come to a beginner's mind, a "don't know" mind, an open or receptive mind by simply following the technique, intending to directly experience your true nature, then reporting whatever comes up within the self structure to your partner.

To reiterate, YOU ARE NOT USING THE CONDITIONED MIND TO FIND OUT WHO YOU ARE. THERE IS NO ANSWER ON THE LEVEL OF THE CONDITIONED MIND THAT WILL BE SATISFACTORY. Who you are is not an answer on the level of mind. It can only be directly Experienced.

Continuous, unbroken practice is the key to success. Energy builds up and leads to "the flip". It is best not to nap. Keep contemplating during the breaks, while eating, going to the washroom etc. The mind's defences are down when it is tired, and it is the best time to do self inquiry.

Inspirational quotes:

Ramana Maharshi:

"If you hold this feeling of "I" long enough and strongly enough the false I will vanish leaving only unbroken awareness of the real immanent "I" or consciousness itself.

Mumon:

"Concentrate yourself into this "Wu" (empty awareness) making your whole mind body one great inquiry. Day and night work intently at it."