

Prayer, Meditation, Dreams and Synchronicity

by John Gallagher

Prayer

Prayer is a means of talking to or communing with our Higher Power and expressing our emotions and needs. Prayer can be informal and resemble a conversation we would have with a close friend, parent or counsellor etc. How a person relates to their Higher Power is personal to them. For example, a person may relate to their HP as God, mother, father, someone or something who or which is benevolent, wise, supportive and powerful. Our conscious mind is only a fraction of our total mind. Our unconscious mind or Higher Power is vast and immensely more powerful than our ego-consciousness. Our Higher Power is an inner resource which we can utilise to assist us. When we are worried, feeling down or experiencing difficulties praying to our HP and sharing our fears, difficulties and needs can provide relief, lessen our burden, give us hope and prayer can effect changes which assist us when our problems seem insurmountable.

When we pray we engage our Higher Power and release energy into the universe and the universe will respond. You may be feeling sceptical about the power of prayer. I know I was before I put it into practice. Try it out for yourself and draw your own conclusions but you must pray with conviction otherwise it won't be effective. Our prayers will always be answered but not always in ways we are expecting. Be open to the creativity of your Higher Power. Prayer, however, cannot stop the inevitable but prayer can help us to cope with the inevitable. Hard times will be followed by good times. We will all experience loss. Sickness and death will come to us all but physical death is not the end.

Prayer is an excellent way to begin your day and invite God to be with you and guide you throughout your day. Prayers provide comfort and guide our thoughts and actions. You will find or create the prayers which resonate with you over time. To begin with you could start your day by saying this prayer on awakening:

God I offer myself to you. I am willing to grow under your direction. Help me to become aware and free from delusion. Assist me to gain insight into my experiences. Increase my self-awareness so that I can respond instead of reacting to life. Take my distress and replace it with serenity. Make me an example of maturity and love.

We can pray and talk to God anytime during our day. We may want to express gratitude or we may be needing guidance or support. God is an incredible resource of support and guidance and is always available for us. Our faith in God will grow as we recognise God's response to our prayers unfolding in our lives in mysterious ways.

Meditation

Meditation is a means to experience serenity and tap into an inner resource to guide us. Regular meditation practice can help us to become calmer and less reactive to our environment. Meditation quiets our conscious mind and opens up our intuition. During meditation we may receive an intuitive thought or mental image which serves to guide us on this journey of life. Prayer is talking to God and meditation is listening for God. Our intuitive thoughts can be our Higher Power's response to our prayers giving us hope and guidance. We are conditioned to believe that happiness comes from achieving our goals in life and investing for our future. These things are important and worth pursuing but they won't bring true happiness. True happiness comes from within. And the truth is that we are happiness. We are joy. We are

love. We are bliss. We are awareness. Meditation helps us to discover our true nature and enjoy the energy of our being. For our innermost being is part of the Source.

There are many different styles of meditation employing various techniques. Try different ones to find the type of meditation which suits you. I prefer to sit in silence with my eyes closed. I focus on my breathing to quiet and empty my mind. I inhale through my nose and exhale through my nose. I experience the air coming in and the air leaving. This is very relaxing. I do this until I have quieted my sensory and thinking mind and I have entered the void of unknowing and serenity. Intuitive thoughts or mental images can and will occur in this deep state of relaxation and the trick is to be open to them and not try to shut them out. If my mind starts to wander and chatter I focus on my breathing again to gently take me back into my meditation. Start with a 5 min meditation each day and gradually increase the duration over time until you are meditating for 20 to 30 mins daily.

Dreams

Our Higher Power may attempt to communicate with us in symbolic form through dreams, visions, art, poetry and many other forms of creative expression. When we take notice of and interpret our dreams, visions, drawings, paintings and poetry etc. this creates a dialogue with our Higher Power (unconscious mind). Dreams are open to interpretation. It takes many years of keeping dream journals and learning the art of dream analysis to become a proficient dream interpreter. Initially we will see what we want to see but as time goes on we will become more objective. As we progress in our practice our intuition will open up and we may have a significant dream or dreams. These dreams are blessings from our Higher Power for our efforts and progress. If you feel moved to do so write them down and start a dream journal. When one begins their inner journey symbols of the unconscious will appear.

There are many books which we can reference to assist us in the interpretation of our dreams and they will all contain the bias of that particular approach or writer. *Man and His Symbols* by Carl Jung was an indispensable resource for me and provided a framework for my inner journey. However, the only criticism I have of *Man and His Symbols* is that it describes the anima (feminine) as the unconscious woman in a man and the animus (masculine) as the unconscious man in a woman but this is too simplistic and not applicable to many people. The anima or animus may be dominant or unconscious in a person depending on their personality type¹ and regardless of their sex. Each person must be treated as an individual.

Most of our dreams won't be very important and will be hard to recall so don't worry about not writing them down in your journal. The significant ones make more of an impression and are easier to remember. Some dreams we may discard initially as dream nonsense as they are so bizarre but if they keep coming back into our mind during the next couple of days then it's a significant dream which is calling for an interpretation and it has an important message to convey. Some of my most bizarre dreams have turned out to be the most meaningful. If you feel an aversion to dreamwork then trust your instincts and leave it for the time being. The dreams will come when you are ready for them.

Synchronicity

Synchronicities are meaningful coincidences. It is the significance of these coincidences for the person experiencing them which makes them meaningful. Synchronicities, also known as God instances, will occur when we are growing in God-consciousness and our intuition or sixth sense is opening up. They occur more frequently when we are progressing on our path of awakening, self-actualization and self-realization. For example, you may have been thinking about something or acquiring some new insight and later on in the day you meet someone who

¹ The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator has 16 personality types.

mentions the thing you were thinking about or becoming aware of. Or a post may appear on your social media which is related to what you have been thinking about or it may be heralding a milestone you are approaching in your development. Or maybe you have prayed for help on a certain matter and sometime later you are attending a gathering of people and someone responds to your prayer with some form of support or advice without realising it or having spoken to you beforehand. God works through people. These are some examples of synchronicities which can be acting as a beacon to guide us and inspire us and let us know that we are on the right track. Or they may be providing us with assistance and support or confirmation. You are not alone. This is the universe's way of communicating with us. We have now discovered an outer resource of which we were previously unaware of.

Synchronicities may appear baffling as we are living in an age of materialism and have been conditioned to believe that we are objects separated by space and living in isolation from each other, the world and the universe. So how can my thoughts and prayers cause my environment to respond in peculiar ways? Synchronicities are easily explainable when we think in terms of energy. Our essence is an energy field which is part of a universal energy field which connects all things. *Everything is connected*. This energy field is invisible to our ordinary senses but it is known by our sixth sense or intuition. Space is not a vacuum. Space is an ocean of energy and we are a wave on that ocean of energy.

Our minds are not encapsulated in our skulls. Our thoughts and feelings extend beyond our bodies in the form of energy. We are transmitters and receivers of energy. If we use the analogy of a mobile phone network. We are each like a mobile phone which can transmit signals (messages) into a network and receive signals (messages) from a network of other mobile phones (people). Our minds are interacting subconsciously and non-locally. We are all part of a vast network which is a universal mind. When we experience synchronicities our intuition is opening up and we are becoming aware of this universal mind or God. Through meditation and dreams we find God within and through synchronicity we find God without.

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