

Subtlety in Meditation

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Practicants of Pranahuti Aided Meditation are often asked to describe their experience during a meditation session either during their daily sadhana or after a pranahuti session i.e after an individual sittings or a satsang. Many a times they say that the meditational experience was Subtle. The word 'subtle' is one of the many commonly used terms. It is very important for each sadhaka to understand and use such words so as to convey exactly what they intend to convey.

The word subtle means many things to many people. When asked to elaborate further, it is found that there are no adequate phrases to give a graphic description of the experience of subtle condition during meditation. This is not unusual as they are asked to describe something which is at the feelings level and most of us are not trained to describe the feelings, as we know that it is difficult to describe the taste of a pudding than eating it.

Some of the common descriptions of the subtle condition during meditation are listed below. The list is not exhaustive:

“As the meditation started, I felt some force or vibrations and after sometime I found that the intensity of force or vibrations less, this I call as Subtle condition”

“During the meditation session, there was total awareness, which means that I was aware of my own internal feelings and thoughts, but I did not find the thoughts disturbing. This state of awareness with thoughts is a subtle meditation”

“There was absorption even in the presence of various thoughts meaning thereby a state of non concentration-concentration. This is a subtle meditation”.

“Sometimes the transmission is so intense or forceful that the attention to it is sustained and one finds no distraction. This intensity is almost akin to the experience of standing under a waterfall. This kind of intensity is not there today, therefore I would call this a subtle meditation”

We are asked to observe whether, “Do we feel deep calm/ subtle or we felt the intensity of Pranahuti. Therefore conditions when the intensity of Pranahuti is not felt are stated to be subtle.

We are asked to observe whether there were thoughts on Master or related matters but are not tinged with any emotions. When the state of meditation is such where we

are devoid of any emotions, we call it subtle whether we feel calm or not.

The word subtle is used by some even to camouflage a condition of mind which is not settled because they feel at that time the force of transmission also.

From the above, it may be seen that different persons have different notions about the condition of subtleness. In this context it is relevant to remember the words of the Master that subtle force is very powerful and it pushes the aspirants down if he is not pure to the extent required. “Subtle force is very strong, and if an abhyasi tries to go further by his own effort, he is pushed down because he can not get at the subtle force” (Showers of Divine Grace page 43.)

We may try to describe the condition of subtlety as a state of mind where one experiences deep calm with no emotions, but as one tries go deeper into it or try to sustain it by one’s effort then the condition pushes out the person, as it is a subtle force, and one gets various thoughts which suggest to him that he needs further purification. The extent of inner purification enables a person to get absorbed in the condition for a longer time. If the feeling of the awareness of the Other than the self during this condition the abhyasi calls it as expansion. In a state of expansion also the aspirant feels the vibrations

are of low frequency and awareness of flow is not also felt many times.

This is in contrast to the other deep experiences where one finds the meditation intense and one's attention is sustained on the object of meditation giving no scope to distracting thoughts and the abhyasi finds many a time benumbed. The intensity of the force is also felt as vibrations or flow as if one is under a waterfall.