

Know Thy Self

Meditation Two: Astral Perception

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In this meditation exercise, we will explore the nature of our own astral body and perception through our astral senses. Our first task will be to experientially identify our own unique astral body and to accomplish this, I will be introducing a new technique.

Our work this time does not require all of the special environmental arrangements necessary for the first meditation exercise. All you will need is a room where you are assured of privacy and the ability to recline comfortably. Again, the preferred physical posture for this meditation exercise is reclining, with your head slightly elevated above your chest, and your chest slightly elevated above your abdomen.

So, get comfortable in your reclining position and close your eyes . . .

(pause)

To begin, we need to truly connect our intentional-objective awareness with our physical body. The best way to achieve this is by turning our tactile, feeling sense inward and *experiencing* how it feels to be in our body.

Focus your awareness in your left foot and perceive the sensations present within it. Objectively note the subjective content inherent to this perception and focus your attention upon the *experience* of the sensation.

(pause)

Now shift your awareness to your left calf and likewise perceive the sensations present within it. Objectively note the subjective content and focus upon the *experience* of the sensation.

(pause)

Now shift your awareness to your left thigh and repeat the same regimen of perception and experience.

(pause)

Now shift to your left hip and buttocks.

(pause)

Now repeat the same sequence with your right foot, (pause) calf, (pause) thigh, (pause) hip and buttocks (pause).

Now expand your awareness to encompass your entire left and right legs, from hips to feet, simultaneously, and perceive the sensations present within this region. Objectively note the subjective content inherent to this perception and focus your attention upon the *experience* of the sensation.

(pause)

Now expand your awareness to include your left hand, your right hand, and your pelvic region, within your field of perception. Perceive and experience your hands and pelvic region as they are each included.

(pause)

Now expand to include your left forearm, your right forearm and your abdomen, perceiving and experiencing as each is included within your field of perception.

(pause)

Now expand to include your left upper-arm and shoulder, your right upper-arm and shoulder, and your entire chest area.

(pause)

And finally, expand your field of perception to include your neck and head. Perceive and experience your neck and head as they are added.

(pause)

Spread your awareness throughout your entire physical body and truly *experience* what it feels like to be in it.

(pause)

Recognize that you – an intentional-objective awareness – an essential Self – are *in* your physical body. You occupy your physical body. You use your physical body. But you are not *dependant upon* your physical body. *You exist aside from your physical body.* *You can choose to not be affected by your body, to not experience your body.*

(pause)

Focus your awareness upon the subjective emotional aspect of your perception of your physical body. Perceive the ways that you feel emotionally about your body as a whole and about each of its parts.

(pause)

This body of emotional feelings is the densest, most personalized aspect of your astral body. On average, its content is almost exclusively derived from the unintentional awareness. Which means that the average person has really had little or no hand in shaping how they truly feel about their own bodies, even though these attitudes color so much of how a person expresses themselves through their body.

The next layer of our astral body is composed of this same emotion-substance but of a somewhat more rarified form. Since we are generally so unused to directly perceiving this astral emotion-substance we will need to begin the process of attaining a perception by first *imagining* its presence and in this way, come to *experience* it.

Begin by imagining that this emotion-substance forms a thick, cocoon-like layer surrounding your physical body. Let it be without detail or color for now. It is just raw emotion-substance.

(pause)

Now focus your awareness upon your own personality traits, both positive and negative. Name them to the best of your ability and as you name each one, imagine that it gives form to a portion of the emotion-substance surrounding your physical body.

(long pause)

Eventually, all of the emotion-substance surrounding your body is taken over by your character traits. The result is a very complex shell filled with the symbolic colors and shapes of your specific personality traits.

(pause)

Now focus upon a specific trait-form that exists within this body of emotion-substance. Use your intentional-objective awareness to perceive this character trait and objectively note the subjective content inherent to this perception.

(pause)

Now focus your attention upon the *experience* of this trait. Really place yourself within the experience of what it feels like to be this trait.

(pause)

Now shift your focus to an adjacent trait within your emotion-substance body and follow the same perceptual and experiential process in its exploration. Perceive it and note its subjective content, then experience what it feels like to be this trait.

(pause)

Continue in this manner, shifting your focus from one trait to the next until you have perceived and experienced all of your personality traits reflected within your emotion-substance body.

(long pause)

Now expand your awareness to include your entire emotion-substance body and all of your character traits simultaneously within your field of perception and truly *experience* what it feels like to be in it.

(long pause)

This layer of your astral body represents the form your character gives to, or impresses upon, the astral substance. Normally, the character traits that give form to this aspect of the astral body are the product of unintentional processes and as such, this aspect of the astral body infuses perception and expression with unintentional-subjective content. This astral content acts as one of our main subjectifying filters in perception.

Perception through this aspect of the astral body occurs by a process of emotional emulation in which an external emotional state is compared with the contents of our own character. We then experience either resonance or dissonance in relation with the external emotional state, depending upon whether or not we recognize that state within our own emotional content. Resonance occurs when we find similarity and are able to emulate the state within our own astral body and, conversely, dissonance occurs when there is no recognition and we cannot achieve emulation. Thus the range and quality of the emotions that have been given form within this layer of our astral body determines our astral sensitivity.

When we transform our character from its ordinary state of unintentionality, into a creation of the intentional-objective awareness, then the nature and quality of our astral body and its powers of perception and expression shift from the unintentional to the intentional. In other words, when the character traits that give form to the emotion-substance of the astral body become a matter of intention and positive purpose, then the astral body itself becomes a tool of the essential Self.

Once the character has been transformed into an intentionalized state, it ceases to be restricted by the limitations of its own content and can then achieve resonance with emotional states not present within the scope of its own content. This is when the so called astral senses of clairvoyance, clairaudience and clairsentience become accessible to the intentional awareness. Here, the intentional awareness is able to use the refined astral body to achieve resonance with any emotional states it chooses, thus gaining a direct emotional *experience* of those states.

For now though, we will set aside discussing the attributes of the transformed astral body and return to our exploration of the more basic astral perception available to all.

Once again, focus your awareness upon the perception of your entire emotion-substance body and all of the character traits that give it form. *Experience* what it feels like to be **in** this body.

(pause)

Now gently open your eyes and expand your perceiving awareness to include an external examination of the room you are in. Simultaneously, retain your awareness of your astral body.

Now take note of the ways that your astral body reacts or interacts with the details of the room. Note which details your astral body experiences resonance with and which it experiences dissonance with. Note which details give you emotional comfort and satisfaction, and which elicit a sense of repulsion and emotional discomfort.

(pause)

Focus your awareness **into** your astral body's *experience* of resonance and dissonance as it occurs.

(long pause)

Note the degree to which these astral perceptions of your surroundings inform you primarily of ***your reaction to*** the objective details you are observing.

(pause)

Aside from your subjective astral reaction, there is also the emotional state of the object itself which is in no way dependant upon your emotional reaction. It is this objective emotional state of the object itself to which ***your*** astral body reacts. Focus your intentional-objective awareness upon the direct perception of the emotional state that each object itself possesses separate from your astral reaction to it.

(long pause)

Focus again on the sound of my voice and gently return to a more normal perception of your surroundings.

Sit upright and reorient yourself while I say a few words in closing.

The great difficulty in designing this particular meditation exercise of exploring the astral body is the fact that it must be suited to a broad spectrum of personalities. ☺ If you have already achieved the transformation of your character as described in the first three Steps

of *Initiation Into Hermetics*, then you will naturally be capable of far more precise astral perception than covered by this brief exploration. If that is your situation, then I recommend further exploration and experimentation along those lines. Use the methods I've outlined to deepen your objective perception of the objective emotional states inherent to your surroundings.

If on the other hand, you have not engaged in a disciplined examination and transformation of your personal character, then I highly recommend it to you! ☺ Doing so will, among other benefits, open your perceptual faculties to a whole new and far richer view of the world and of yourself.

In any event, I suggest that over the coming days and weeks you use the faculties of your intentional-objective awareness and actively pursue astral perception in your mundane encounters. Truly experience the emotional states you encounter. Savor them to their fullest and draw from them their objective meanings hidden among your subjective reactions. Use your awareness to spend time truly experiencing life within the miracle of your own astral body!

My best to you!